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THE PALESTINIAN EXODUS FROM GALILEE 1948

BY
NAFEZ NAZZAL

THE INSTITUTE FOR PALESTINE STUDIES
1978

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To the Children of Palestine

May You Learn from Our Past
for the Sake of Our Future

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FOREWORD

In virtually every war of modern and ancient times civilians have been forced to flee to escape the fighting, taking refuge elsewhere until, with the cessation of hostilities, they could return to their homes.

As this book shows, what occurred in Palestine during the war of 1947-49 was an exodus of a fundamentally different character. It involved the systematic expulsion of most of the Arab population from its homes, and its exile from Palestine, as part of a premeditated scheme to transform radically the demography of the country in fulfilment of the colonial ideal of Zionism — making Palestine "as Jewish as England is English."[1]

This *colonial settler*[2] nature of Zionism — the substitution of one people for another by force of arms — and the tragic situation it has created in Palestine over the past half century, is at the heart of the current conflict in the Middle East, although this essential fact has unfortunately been obscured by Israeli and much Western scholarship on the Palestine question.

As Dr. Nazzal shows with a wealth of detail in this book, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled their homeland in 1948 — not simply to escape the fighting, or because "their leaders told them to", as has often been alleged by Zionist authors. Their flight was rather the desired outcome of a process which began early in this century, when a nationalist movement in the classical 19th century tradition selected an Asian land for its colonial activities, established itself step-by-step with Great Power assistance, and fought to overcome the resistance of the indigenous population.

The culmination of this process in the greater part of Palestine came during the 1947-49 war, when the processes of Zionist land seizure, occupation and settlement (which are still taking place in the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan) reached their apogee in the areas incorporated into the state of Israel. It is the merit of this work that it shows precisely how

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[1] The words are those of Chaim Weizmann in a statement to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. C. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, New York, 1949, p. 244.

[2] Again in Weizmann's words: "What the French could do in Tunisia, I said, the Jews would be able to do in Palestine." *Ibid.*, p. 244.

this state came into being through the forcible expropriation and dispossession of the Arab majority of the population of Palestine, relying on first-hand accounts by scores of participants in and witnesses to the events, as well as on extensive historical research.

Naturally, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee, 1948* does not attempt to describe all aspects of this process. Focusing instead on what happened in the almost entirely Arab region of Galilee in North Palestine, the author shows in microcosm what was happening elsewhere in the country from late 1947 until 1949 — in the cities and villages of the coastal plain, the Negev, the hill villages on the Jaffa-Jerusalem road, and indeed in virtually all the areas which were ultimately incorporated into the Zionist state.

Based on over 100 interviews with Palestinians who lived through the events it describes, and who still live in exile from their homeland, this book, originally presented as a Ph.D. dissertation at Georgetown University, is the first detailed and scholarly historical account of the Palestinian exodus of 1948, the event which is central to any serious understanding of the Palestine question.

It provides irrefutable evidence that the foundation of the state of Israel was accompanied by, and indeed conditional on, the wholesale expulsion of the Palestinian Arab majority of the population from their homes and property. In so doing, it answers once and for all the claim that the Palestinians left their homes for reasons other than systematic Zionist terror, a canard which has survived all the evidence for three decades.

At a time when their long and difficult struggle has won the Palestinian people considerable international recognition, notwithstanding the stubborn attempts to ignore them and their legitimate national aspirations by Israel and its friends and allies, this book is particularly relevant. For it reveals in a sober and well-documented fashion the roots of the sense of injustice which motivates the Palestinian people, both those whose dispossession and expulsion is described in the pages which follow, and their children and grand-children, some of whom have never seen Palestine, but all of whom are determined to return to live in freedom in their homeland.

Rashid Khalidi
Institute for Palestine Studies

PREFACE

The problem of the Palestinian exodus during the war of 1948 has been approached from various points of view. Initially, Joseph B. Schechtman, in his book, *The Arab Refugee Problem,*[1] asserted that the Palestinians were ordered to leave their homes by Arab officials. Erskine Childers, "The Other Exodus"[2] and "The Wordless Wish: From Citizens to Refugees,"[3] countered this claim by examining all the radio broadcasts in the area during the war, monitored by the B.B.C. from Cyprus, while Walid Khalidi, "Why Did the Palestinians Leave?"[4] had previously examined the B.B.C. material, the C.I.A. files at Princeton and also three major Arab newspapers, the Egyptian *al-Ahram,* the Lebanese *al-Hayat* and the leading Palestinian newspaper, *al-Difa*ᶜ without finding any evidence to support the Zionists' claim.

The purpose of this study is to investigate as accurately and thoroughly as possible what happened in the Galilee District during the war of 1948 and why the majority of the Palestinian Arabs left their homes.

The information required for this study could only be obtained from the Palestinian refugees. The first study to utilize systematic interviews with the refugees is Peter Dodd and Halim Barakat, *River Without Bridges: A Study of the Exodus of the 1967 Palestinian Arab Refugees.*[5] This sociological survey inquired into the social, economic, and political conditions of the 1967 refugees prior to their departure, to help determine their reasons for leaving.

In this study, I present the results of interviews with Palestinian refugees from the Galilee District, conducted in Lebanon and Syria between January and July 1973.

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[1] New York, Philosophical Library, 1952.

[2] *Spectator,* 190, May 12, 1961, pp. 672-75.

[3] Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, ed., *The Transformation of Palestine* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1971), pp. 165-202.

[4] *Middle East Forum, XXXV,* No. 7 (July, 1959), 21-24.

[5] Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969.

I interviewed 111 Palestinian refugees from 32 Galilean towns and villages (representing about 14 per cent of the total villages, but including 40 per cent of the total population of Galilee): five villages in Eastern Galilee, eight villages in the Hula Valley; two villages in the Beisan Valley; seven villages in Western Galilee; seven villages in Lower Galilee; and three villages in Upper Galilee.

I selected from two to seven villages involved in each military operation carried out by the Zionists in occupying Galilee, to learn from the refugees involved the processes of occupation and dispersion. I chose the larger of these villages and those best represented in the camps.

To compare responses for accuracy and completeness, I interviewed two to five people in each village, selecting those villagers who participated in the defence of their village individually or through a locally raised militia. The majority of the Palestinians interviewed were farmers — although I also met with former policemen, teachers, businessmen, labourers, mechanics, merchants, mukhtars, bus drivers, housewives, physicians, and a judge. The interviewees were residents of Beirut, al-Ghaziyih, and the refugee camps of ʿAin al-Hilwah, Burj al-Barajnih, Shatila and Tall al-Zaʿtar in Lebanon, and Damascus, Dummar, and the refugee camps of Yarmuk, Khan al-Shaikh, and Dirʿa in Syria.

The Palestinian camps have naturally been organized into areas where fellow villagers live together, thus simulating a mini-Palestine within each camp.

Meeting the refugees in the various camps was greatly facilitated by the Palestine Liberation Organization. The military command in each camp supplied me with a list of the villages represented there and introduced me to a family in the camp, who in turn introduced me to other families and so on.

The interview schedule consisted of thirty-four questions organized around two topics: the war of 1948 and the exodus. The questions were first formulated in English with the assistance of Professors Hisham Sharabi and Peter Dodd, but the interviews themselves were conducted in Arabic.

Most of the interviews were carried out in the homes of my informants and were usually based on free discussions. After establishing an informal rapport, I gave a brief explanation of my

study, stating my interest in investigating what happened in their village during the war of 1948.

I began by asking them how they used to get news in their village and what they heard about the war. Usually at that point they would begin speaking freely about everything that happened to them and to their village during the war. I took very few notes during the interview itself, writing down mostly numbers and names. If I had any doubts about certain things mentioned, I usually waited until the reminiscences were completed and then indirectly checked the statement with my informant. After the interview was concluded, I would return home and fill out the questionnaire sheets while the information was still fresh in my mind. If all the questions were not answered, I would meet with my informants again, specifically asking for the information still lacking.[6]

As I began conducting the interviews, I was given access by Professor Walid Khalidi, Executive Secretary of the Institute for Palestine Studies, to the private papers of Fauzi al-Qawuqji (a career army officer from Lebanon and a leader of the 1936 Palestinian revolt), who was the commander-in-chief of field operations in Galilee and Samaria for the Arab Liberation Army (ALA) during the period under discussion. The papers were uncatalogued and dispersed in several large envelopes. In order to make full use of this valuable source material, I had no alternative but to examine each paper separately in order to determine its value or pertinence. The papers contained a welter of facts, observations, recommendations and cables relating to the 1948 war in the Galilee. (Some of these documents have been published by the *Journal of Palestine Studies*.[7])

I also made use of valuable Arabic-language material — especially monographs, memoirs, and periodicals — in the special collections of the libraries of the Institute for Palestine Studies, the Palestine Liberation Organization Research Center, and the American University of Beirut.

Transliteration of place names is according to Government of Palestine, *Palestine Gazette,* Supplement No. 2, No. 1415, June 7, 1945, pp. 621-23, and "Palestine: Index to Villages and Settlements,

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[6] See Appendix II.

[7] "Memoirs, 1948," I, No. 4 (Summer, 1972), 27-58 and II, No. 1 (Autumn, 1972), pp. 3-33.

1:150,000" (Jaffa: Survey of Palestine, 1946). All other transliterations of Arabic are according to the following English transliteration system:

'		d	د	d	ض	k	ك
b	ب	dh	ذ	t	ط	l	ل
t	ت	r	ر	z	ظ	m	م
th	ث	z	ز	'	ع	n	ن
j	ج	s	س	gh	غ	h	ه
h	ح	sh	ش	f	ف	w/u	و
kh	خ	s	ص	q	ق	y/i	ي
u	ـُ	i	ـِ	a	ـَ	a	ا

I am greatly indebted to the Institute for Palestine Studies (IPS) whose grant in the winter, spring and summer of 1973 enabled me to carry out my field work in Lebanon and Syria. I wish particularly to thank Professor Walid Khalidi, Executive Secretary of IPS, Dr. Walid Khadduri, formerly Director of Research, IPS, and Mr. Sabri Jiryis, formerly Head of the Hebrew Section at IPS, and the staff of the Hebrew Section for their kindness and cooperation.

I should like to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Hisham Sharabi, whose concern for the Palestinian people prompted this study, and Dr. Peter Dodd for his invaluable advice relating to my field work.

This project could not have been carried out without the generous cooperation of the Palestinians I interviewed. To them I express my heartfelt thanks and gratitude for their open welcome and hospitality.

Birzeit University
West Bank
1978

NAFEZ NAZZAL

CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTORY SURVEY OF GALILEE

The Galilee District comprised the northern sector of Mandatory Palestine bordering on Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. The natural geographical divisions of the District are the coastal plain of Acre, the lowland Beisan Valley and Upper and Lower Galilee, separated by the Sahil al-Battauf, the Hula Valley, the basalt hills, the plain of Samakh and the slopes of Tiberias.[1] The District was divided into five administrative sub-districts during the British Mandate: Acre (including 52 towns and villages), Beisan (42), Nazareth (44), Safad (78) and Tiberias (44). The estimated total land area of the Galilee District following the British Mandate's land revision of 1942 was 2,801,383 dunums, excluding 179,000 dunums of water area in Lake Hula (Waters of Meirun) and Lake Tiberias (Sea of Galilee).[2]

Most of the areas in Galilee were rich in water resources, allowing intensive cultivation in the District. The land was divided almost equally between good and medium quality land and over 60 per cent of the total Galilee area (including the inland water) was cultivated.[3] There are no mineral resources and thus it was basically a farming region, with sufficient water for permanent agriculture.

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[1] This survey of Galilee is limited to conditions as of 1948. See Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division of the Admiralty, *Palestine and Transjordan*, Geographical Handbook Series, B.R. 514 (Oxford: Naval Intelligence Division, 1943), Fig. 2, p. 3.

Also see Appendix A for detailed map of the boundaries of the District.

[2] One acre equals 4.05 dunums. Area estimates from Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945: A Classification of Land and Area Ownership in Palestine*, comp. by Sami Hadawi (reprinted Beirut: Palestine Liberation Organization Research Center, 1970), p. 39.

[3] The Institute for Palestine Studies, *The Partition of Palestine, 29 November 1947: An Analysis* (Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1967), Appendix IV. In the United Nations, General Assembly, Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question, 2nd Session, November 11, 1947, *Report of Sub-Committee 2*, A/AC. 14/32, pp. 70-73, the utilization of land in Galilee was also determined.

A population census was taken in 1922 and 1931; political unrest prevented the British Mandate from carrying out the census in 1936, 1941 and 1946.

Demographic estimates were provided until 1947 on the basis of the 1931 figure, recorded migration and the natural growth rate. Of the estimated total population in Galilee of 246,900, as of December 31, 1946, 207,490 were Arabs, and 39,410 were Jews, as in Table 1.

ARAB AND JEWISH POPULATION IN THE GALILEE SUB-DISTRICTS [4]

Sub-District	Arabs (%)	Jews (%)
Acre	96	4
Beisan	70	30
Nazareth	87	13
Safad	87	13
Tiberias	67	33

Approximately 81 per cent of the Arab population of Galilee was Muslim, 14 per cent Christian and 5 per cent other religious groups, primarily Druze.[5] Although the majority of the people remained rural and agricultural, there was a significant movement of population towards the towns between 1931-1944. This is illustrated by the urban population of the five major towns of Galilee which increased by 50 per cent during these years.[6]

Land ownership was a central issue in Mandatory Palestine. In February 1940, responding to Arab opposition to selling land to Jews in Palestine, the British government issued the "Land Transfer Regulations," restricting transfers of land to Jews. Under this law, "land' includes water, buildings, trees and any interest in, or right in, to or over, land, water, buildings, or trees. 'Transfers' includes leases,

[4] United Nations, General Assembly, Ad Hoc Committee, Second Session, November 1, 1947, *Report of Sub-Committee 2* A/Ac. 14/32, p. 43.

[5] See Appendix IV for a breakdown of population by religion.

[6] Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine: Prepared in December 1945 and January 1946 for the Information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry* (Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1946), I, p. 410.

mortgages, charges and other dispositions."[7] The new law divided Palestine into three zones: Zone A, 61.1 per cent of the total land area, was prohibited to Jewish buyers; Zone B, 31.8 per cent of the total land area, could be open to purchase by Jews only with the written permission of the High Commissioner; the uncontrolled area, Zone C, 5.1 per cent of the total land area, was the only area open to Jews without administrative restrictions.[8] But between October 1939 and September 1946, the Jewish National Fund gained control of 270,000 dunums in Zones A and B. In these zones, 75,000 dunums were bought from Jews residing mostly in Galilee, 60,000 dunums of nominally Jewish-owned land was acquired, and 135,000 dunums were bought from Arabs. Approximately 147,000 dunums of this restricted or prohibited land was acquired in Galilee: 46,000 dunums of Zone A in Lower Galilee and 101,000 dunums of Zone B in Upper Galilee, the Jezreel Valley and the Jordan Valley (Beisan area). Much of the land in the eastern part of Upper Galilee was purchased without the permission of the Government of Palestine from Syrian and Lebanese Arabs.[9]

Statistics on land ownership in Palestine preceeding 1948 vary. Of the 2,801,383 dunums total land of the Galilee District, on April 1, 1945, Arabs owned 1,848,411 dunums compared with 576,028 dunums owned by the Jews.[10] Other sources estimate the Jewish settlement (excluding non-rural holdings) on December 1946 as 479,700 dunums,[11] 454,928 dunums,[12] and 462,682 dunums.[13]

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[7] Palestine, *Laws of 1939*, II, p. 459, cited in *ibid.*, I, p. 262.

[8] *Palestine, A Survey of Palestine*, I, p. 261-62.

[9] Jewish National Fund, *Report on the Activities of Keren Kayemeth Leisrael Limited* (Jerusalem: Jewish National Fund, 1946), pp. 14-16.

See Appendix V for display of names of those who sold land to Jews in Galilee.

[10] Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, pp. 41, 44, 63, 71, and 73.

Also see Appendix VI for statistics on land ownership in Galilee.

[11] Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, I, 243, and Government of Palestine, *Supplement to Survey of Palestine, Notes Compiled for the Information of the United Nations' Special Committee on Palestine* (Jerusalem: Government Printer, June, 1947), p. 30.

[12] Gertz, A., ed. *Statistical Handbook of Jewish Palestine, 1947*, (Jerusalem: The Jewish Agency for Palestine, 1947) pp. 416-26.

See Appendix II for a list of Jewish settlements.

[13] Jewish National Fund, *Jewish Villages in Israel* (Jerusalem: Jewish National Fund, 1949), pp. 3-183, *passim*.

CHAPTER II

THE WAR IN GALILEE, APRIL 1 TO OCTOBER 31, 1948

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly, by a vote of 33 to 13 with 10 abstentions, decided to partition Palestine into two states, Jewish and Arab, with an international zone around Jerusalem.[1]

The partition plan was so inequitable that even in the proposed Jewish state, the Arabs would have been the majority: 509,780 Arabs (including an estimated 105,000 bedouins not usually counted in population totals for the Jewish state) as against 499,020 Jews. The figures for the Arab state were 749,000 Arabs to 9,520 Jews. In the international zone of Jerusalem, 105,000 of the total population of 205,000 would have been Arab. As far as land ownership was concerned, the injustice of the partition plan was even more striking: Jewish land ownership throughout Palestine totalled less than 10 per cent and exceeded 40 per cent in none of the country's 16 sub-districts.[2]

Not surprisingly, therefore, Arab reaction to what was rightly seen as a travesty of self-determination was uniformly negative. Haj Amin al-Hussaini, the Mufti of Jerusalem and the head of the Arab Higher Committee,[3] denounced the resolution and called for a three-day strike.

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[1] For further information see United Nations, General Assembly, 2nd Session, November 29, 1947, Resolution 181 (II), *Official Records*, pp. 1424-25.

[2] For further information see the Institute for Palestine Studies, *The Partition of Palestine 29 November 1947*, Appendix 1, p. 51.

[3] The Arab Higher Committee was established in April 1936 and included all major political groups in Palestine which opposed Jewish land purchases and immigration. It was disbanded in 1937 by the Mandatory administration because of its opposition to the British, and many of its leaders were arrested and deported. On June 7, 1946, at a meeting of the Arab League at Bludan, Syria, the Arab Higher Committee was reconstituted, remaining under the leadership of Haj Amin al-Hussaini. ʿArif al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba*, ("The Tragedy"), (Beirut and Sidon: al-Maktaba al-ʿAsriya, 1956-60), I, 43-45.

Meanwhile, the prime ministers of the Arab League states, (Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Transjordan and Yemen), met in Cairo on December 8, 1947,[4] and issued a communiqué condemning the resolution:

> ... the heads and representatives of... [the Arab] Governments have decided that partition is void from its very beginning. They have also decided, in deference to the will of their peoples, to take such drastic measures as would, with the will of God, defeat the unjust partition plan and give support to the right of the Arabs.[5]

In addition, the governments of the Arab League states decided, in a secret agreement, to attempt to prevent the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, and to provide the Arab League Military Committee with 10,000 rifles, 1,000 from both Transjordan and Lebanon and 2,000 each from Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, with a minimum of 500 rounds of ammunition for each rifle.[6] Furthermore, they agreed to provide the Military Committee with 3,000 volunteers, 500 each from Palestine, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Syria and 300 each from Lebanon and Transjordan. It was agreed that these governments would equip their volunteers and transfer them to military camps designated by the Military Committee before January 15, 1948.[7]

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[4] The Arab League states had met in Aley, Lebanon, in October 1947 to review the report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. They decided that the Palestinians should be responsible for the defence of their country and that "the Arab governments would furnish their share of military financing (Egypt, 42%; Iraq, 7%; Lebanon, 11%; Saudi Arabia, 20%; Syria, 12%; Transjordan 5%; and Yemen 3%) in the defence of Palestine... that Arab states should make the necessary military preparations, and that their armies should be stationed on the frontiers of Palestine...." *Ibid.*, I, 14-16.

[5] Full text in Muhammad Khalil, *The Arab States and the Arab League: A Documentary Record* (Beirut: Khayat's, 1962), II, 551.

[6] As of December 7, 1947, the total arms and ammunition of the Arab League Military Committee was put at: 856 rifles; 164 pistols; and 73,000 rounds of ammunition. The Arab League Military Committee, report No. 14/10A, in al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba,* I, 55.

[7] As of February 8, 1948, 4,976 had volunteered for the ALA. They represented Syria (2,987), Palestine (800), Iraq (800), Lebanon (305), Egypt (50), and Yugoslavia (34). Altogether about 2,500 entered Palestine on February 8, 1948, and the rest in mid-May, 1948. Report of the Military Committee to the Arab League, No. 118/27A, *Ibid.*, pp. 102-03.

The Arab Liberation Army (ALA)

The ALA was established by the Arab League on January 1, 1948. It was under the central control of the Military Committee based in Damascus and under the chairmanship of General Ismaʿil Safwat (Iraq). Assisting him were Colonel Mahmud al-Hindi (Syria) and Captain Wasfi al-Tall (Transjordan) for field operations, and Brigadier Taha al-Hashimi (Iraq) for training.[8] Fauzi al-Qawuqji, a career army officer from Lebanon and a leader in the 1936 Palestinian Revolt, was named commander-in-chief of field operations.

At the outset, the Mufti of Jerusalem rejected both Qawuqji's command and Safwat's chairmanship. He feared Qawuqji's relationships with the Iraqi Government and the ruling Hashimite family there. The Mufti insisted on his own chairmanship — and his cousin Abdul-Qadir al-Hussaini's military command in the field. Finally, a compromise was reached whereby Qawuqji was given command of Galilee and Samaria; Abdul-Qadir al-Hussaini, the central Jerusalem-Bab al Wad-Ramallah area (where the Mufti had the most influence and support); and Shaikh Hassan Salamah, a follower of the Mufti, the Western Ramle-Lydda-Jaffa area.[9] The results of this compromise — the division instead of the unification of the Arab command structure — were to reflect themselves negatively on efforts to resist the Zionist offensive until May 1948; and then were to be repeated on a larger scale when the Arab armies entered Palestine in that month.

The Arab Liberation Army was divided into eight battalions. These included Yarmuk I, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Muhammad Safa of Syria and operating in the area between Jenin and Beisan; Yarmuk II, commanded by Captain Adib Shishakli of Syria and operating in the area of Safad, Acre, and Nazareth; Yarmuk III, commanded by Captain Abdul-Hamid al-Rawi of Iraq and operating in the area of Ramallah; ʿAjnadin Battalion, commanded by Captain Michel al-ʿIssa of Palestine and operating in the area between Ramallah and Jerusalem and later in the area of

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[8] *Ibid.*, I, 38.

[9] Letter from Hazem Muhammad Judi to Fauzi Qawuqji, September 5, 1947, the Institute for Palestine Studies Archives. Qawuqji Letter File and al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba*, I, 41.

Jaffa; Hussain Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel ʿAdil Nijim al-Din of Iraq and operating in Jaffa and the western region of Palestine; Qadisiya Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Mahdi Salih al-ʿAni of Iraq and operating in the Ramallah-Bab al-Wad area of the Jerusalem District; Hittin Battalion, commanded by Captain Madlul ʿAbbas of Iraq and operating in Samaria particularly around Tulkarm; and the Druze Battalion, commanded by Captain Shakib ʿAbdul-Wahab and operating in the area around Shafa ʿAmr in the Haifa District.[10]

From its inception the ALA lacked enough arms and ammunition.[11] Recognizing this, the Military Committee had called upon the Arab states in December 1947 to provide 10,000 rifles with 500-1,000 rounds of ammunition each.

But as General Safwat, Commander of the Military Committee, reported, although 9,810 rifles and almost 4 million rounds of ammunition had been supplied to the Military Command by the Arab states as of March 23, 1948, these arms were of different types and many, when put to use, were unserviceable.[12]

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[10] For further information, see *ibid.*, I 28-40; Hani al-Hindi, "Jaish al-Inqadh, *1947-1949* ("The Rescue Army, *1947-1949*), *Shuun Filastiniya,* Nos. 23 and 24 (July and August, 1973), 27-58 and 115-32; Walid Khalidi, ed. *From Haven to Conquest* (Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1971), Appendix VIII, p. 860; and Colonel ʿAbdullah al-Tall, *Karithat Filastin* ("Memoirs of ʿAbdullah al-Tall") (Cairo: Dar al-Qalam, 1959), p. 10.

[11] On December 7, 1947, the Government of Czechoslovakia cancelled its agreement of December 6, 1947 with Syria, to supply the Arab League Military Committee with 10,000 rifles, 1,000 Sten guns, 500 machine guns, and 12,500,000 rounds of ammunition. See al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba,* I, 56. Taha al-Hashimi, Training Commander of the ALA, reports in his memoirs that the Military Committee had received from the Arab states as of February 2, 1948: 4,110 rifles and 1,809,000 rounds of ammunition; that 1,657 rifles and 400,000 rounds of ammunition had been distributed to the people of Palestine, particularly those in Jerusalem, Jaffa and Haifa, and 1,501 rifles and 909,000 rounds of ammunition to the volunteers who had entered Palestine. *Al-Haris* (Baghdad), February 12 to April 30, 1953, Nos. 21-23, in al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba,* I, 55-60.

[12] The breakdown of this total was: Iraq, 3860 rifles with 600,000 rounds of ammunition (in addition to 60 Sten guns); Egypt, 800 rifles with 700,000 rounds of ammunition (Egypt claimed it also gave 1,200 rifles to the Mufti); Saudi Arabia, 1,600 rifles (almost half unserviceable); Syria 2,000 rifles with 2,000,000 rounds of ammunition; Lebanon, 550 rifles with 60,000 rounds of ammunition; Transjordan 1,000 rifles with 500,000 rounds of ammunition. General Ismaʿil Safwat, A Report to the Arab League, No. 53/A, March 23, 1948, in al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba,* I, 60.

In Galilee, Arab strength was based on the ALA's Yarmuk Battalions I and II[13], the local garrisons, and the rural forces. Their total arms as of May 15, 1948, consisted of 1,633 rifles, 24 machine guns and six cannons. Of this total, 399 rifles belonged to the town garrisons (representing Acre, 30; Beisan, 200; Safad, 72; and Tiberias, 97); 350 rifles to the rural forces, of which 140 rifles were in Western Galilee under the command of Abu-Mahmud Saffuri and 210 rifles were in Lower and Eastern Galilee under the command of Abu-Ibrahim al-Saghir; the remaining 884 belonged to the ALA's Yarmuk I and II Battalions.[14]

The Zionist Forces

Zionist strength at this time consisted of the following:

A. The "First-Line Troops" (fully mobilized) totalling 30,000 men, including the Palmach (Plugat Machats, "Striking Force") and the field army (Hayl Sadeh — HISH). There were three Palmach brigades comprising 6,000 men: the Yiftah, Harel and Ha-negev brigades. The field army totalled 24,000 men, including six brigades distributed as follows: Alexandroni 3,588; Carmeli, 2,238 (operating in Western Galilee); Etzioni, 3,166; Givᶜati, 3,229; Golani, 3,572, plus 525 paid employees (operating in the area of Tiberias and the Jordan Valley); and Kiryati, 2,504.[15]

B. The "Second-Line Troops," included the garrison troops (Hayl Matsav-HIM). These were mostly men of twenty-five and over. HIM's primary mission was to man defensive positions at the periphery of each settlement. Its registered membership in the fall of 1947 was 32,000, "but many more trained men could be called up in time of need."[16] There were also the Jewish Settlement

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[13] Yarmuk Battalion I crossed the Jordan River south of Beisan into Palestine on January 20, 1948. The battalion consisted of three companies, totalling 630 volunteers armed with 614 rifles, 18 light machine guns, and four 60-mm. cannons. Yarmuk Battalion II entered Palestine across the Lebanese border on January 8, 1948. It also consisted of three companies, totalling 330 volunteers, armed with 270 rifles, 6 light machine guns and two 75 mm. cannons. *Ibid.*, X, 82.

[14] Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, Appendix VIII, pp. 359-60.

[15] David Ben-Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, Inc. and Tel Aviv: Sabra Books, 1971), p. 93.

[16] Lt. Col. Netanel Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, 1947-1949 (Hartford, Conn.: Hartmore House, Inc., 1968), p. 31.

Police which totalled 15,410 police and special constables as of June 1947,[17] as well as the Home Guard (Mishmar Haʿam) which was estimated in the winter of 1947-48 at 32,000 men. The task of the latter was "to help defend their immediate localities, in villages, towns or cities."[18] In addition there were the "dissident" groups, including the Irgun Zvai Leumi (IZL or Irgun, "National Military Organization") which numbered from 3,000 to 5,000 in 1948,[19] and the Stern Gang (Lochamei Herut Li Israel or LEHI, "Fighters for the Freedom of Israel"). The latter's number was estimated at 200 to 300 men in 1946,[20] and one thousand by the winter of 1947-1948.[21]

This total of over 100,000 first and second line troops massively outnumbered the Palestinian and ALA forces in the field before May 1948, and was over six times larger than the Arab expeditionary forces which entered Palestine in that month.[22]

Most Haganah military strategists expected a Palestinian guerrilla uprising more organized than that of 1936. They did not expect an Arab invasion of Palestine, particularly since the partition resolution had been supported by both America and Russia. Ben-Gurion, however, disagreed and called for an organized army with "heavy equipment, artillery, fighter planes and bombers." On a visit to the United States in June 1945, he urged American Jewish leaders to raise money to build a military industry in Palestine.[23] As early as

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[17] Palestine, *Supplement to Survey of Palestine*, p. 3.

[18] Dov Joseph, *The Faithful City: The Siege of Jerusalem, 1948* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960), p. 29.

[19] Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, *Report to the United States Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom* (Washington: U.S. Government-ment Printing Office, 1946) p. 47. Joseph sets Irgun membership at 5,000 by the winter of 1947-48 in *The Faithful City*, p. 31.

[20] Anglo-American Committee, p. 47.

[21] Joseph, *The Faithful City*, p. 31.

[22] Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, Appendix IX-B, p. 867.

[23] Jon Kimche and David Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill: Britain and the Palestine War* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1960), p. 66. By March 1948, the Zionist arms industry was manufacturing: "100 sub-machine guns per day (to be increased to 200 per day by the end of the first week of April) and 400,000 rounds of 9 mm. ammunition per month. Moreover these factories were coping with orders of the magnitude of 150,000 Mills grenades and 30,000 shells for 3-inch mortars..."
Yigal Allon in *Sepher Ha-Palmach*, II, 51, comp. by Zerubavel Gilead, quoted in Walid Khalidi, "Plan Dalet," *The Middle East Forum* XXXVII, No. 9 (November 1961), 26.

April 1947, the Haganah arsenal was estimated by Ben-Gurion as including 10,073 rifles, 1,900 sub-machine guns, 444 machine guns and 186 Bren guns. The heavy equipment consisted of 672 2-inch mortars and 96 3-inch mortars.[24]

A year later on May 14, 1948, Haganah strength had increased to: 22,000 rifles, 11,100 sub-machine guns, 1,500 light machine guns, and a few medium machine guns. There were 105 3-inch mortars, 682 2-inch mortars, 16 Davidka mortars (crude home-made mortars which tossed a lump of explosive for some 300 yards, accompanied by a noise out of all proportion to the weight of the explosive), 75 PIATS and anti-tank rifles and four 65-mm. guns.[25]

In addition, an air force was built up consisting of: 10 Messerschmitt ME 109's, three 4-engine Constellations, nine Curtis C46 Commandos, one 2-engine transport, nine Austers and 25 Piper Cubs.[26]

Zionist Strategy for the Occupation of Galilee

Already in March 1945, according to Jon and David Kimche, the Haganah had begun to formulate contingency plans for the takeover of Palestine.[27]

> Ben-Gurion, Galili, Yadin and the other Haganah strategists assumed that the main aim of the Arabs would be to isolate and, if possible, capture the Negev and Eastern Galilee, to penetrate the Sharon and Hefer valleys from Qalqilya in the direction of

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[24] David Ben-Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History*, p. 59.

[25] Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill*, p. 161. Elsewhere Ben-Gurion states: "Altogether we purchased 24 airplanes, 59 vessels of various types, 40 tanks, 144 half-tracks, 416 artillery pieces, 24 heavy mortars, 158 heavy machine guns, 1,417 medium machine guns, 6,034 light machine guns, 52,391 rifles,523 sub-machine guns, 1755 pistols." *Israel: A Personal History*, p. 65.

[26] Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, Appendix IX-A, p. 866.

[27] Zionist strategy for the takeover of Palestine was based on Plans A, B, and C. "Plan A was devised in February 1945.... to take over the country during a period of 'transitional minority rule'.... Plan B was devised in May 1947.... to frustrate any interference by the neighbouring Arab forces on behalf of the Palestine Arabs.... Plan C was worked out in November 1947.... [Its] principal objective was... a holding operation with the main reliance being on the striking force of the Palmach and the Jewish Settlement Police....to enable the HIM and HISH brigades to be fully mobilized." *Ibid.*, p. 755.

> Natanya and Herzlia, to isolate the three large cities — Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa — and to interrupt the essential services throughout the country — water, electricity and, particularly, petrol supplies.[28]

To deal with this threat, Haganah replaced its strategy based on plans A, B and C by Plan Dalet, which it formulated in March and early April, 1948. This plan called for the new HISH brigades and the Palmach forces

> to gain control of the area allotted to the Jewish State and defend its borders and those of the blocs of Jewish settlements and such Jewish population as were outside those borders, against a regular or pararegular enemy operating from bases outside or inside the area of the Jewish State.[29]

Two prerequisites were essential for the implementation of the plan: full mobilization and an additional supply of arms. By the end of March 1948, the first consignments of Czech arms[30] had been safely delivered, and six new HISH brigades were almost ready for the offensive.[31] Of the thirteen military operations envisaged by the Haganah in Plan Dalet,[32] four operations: Yiftah, Matateh, Gideon and Ben Ami were carried out in Galilee prior to the termination of the British Mandate and the establishment of the Jewish state on May 15, 1948; three other operations: Dekel, Hiram and Berosh, were carried out after the first and second United Nations truces to complete the occupation of Galilee on October 31, 1948.

Though the British Mandate was to end on May 15, 1948, the British forces began to withdraw from Eastern Galilee and the Hula Valley about the middle of April. This exposed the Jewish quarter of the town of Safad to Arab attack by ALA forces entrenched in the strategic positions around the city: in the police fortress on Mount

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[28] Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill,* p. 92.

[29] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence,* p. 89.

[30] The Czechs were eager to sell arms to Israel in exchange for hard currency. For further information, see Arnold Krammer, "Arms for Independence: When the Soviet Bloc Supported Israel," in Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest,* pp. 745-53.

[31] Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill,* pp. 92-94.

[32] For information about the operations in Plan Dalet see Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest,* Appendix VII, pp. 856-57.

Canaan, in the Citadel, in the municipal police station, and in Shalva House (formerly a Jewish school). On April 14, a platoon of about forty Palmach soldiers, carrying food and ammunition from Mount Canaan, infiltrated the Jewish quarter of Safad, preventing its fall into Arab hands.

On April 19, 1948, the Haganah occupied the town of Tiberias. On April 28, 1948, they captured the police post at Rosh Pinna, and on May 1, they occupied the villages of Biriya and ʿEin ez Zeitun on the northern outskirts of Safad, opening a narrow corridor connecting the police post at Rosh Pinna with the Jewish quarter of Safad.[33] The following day, a Palmach column advanced towards Safad but was repulsed by the Arabs. Between May 3 and 4, the Haganah stepped up its offensive and cleared the remaining villages on the road between Tiberias and Rosh Pinna of their Arab inhabitants, as planned in Operation Matateh, thereby forming a unified front out of the isolated Jewish settlements in Eastern Galilee and the Hula Valley, and prepared for the occupation of Safad.[34]

The decisive battle for Safad began on the eve of May 11, with a simultaneous attack on the city's key positions. Fierce fighting went on all night and, in the morning, when all strategic areas were captured by the Haganah, the city fell. Arab forces in Safad were disorganized and leaderless. Sari Fnaish, commander of the local garrison, resigned from his post on May 9. Imil Jmaiʿan, second in command, had already reported on his return from Transjordan on May 8 that King ʿAbdullah had ordered him to pull out the Transjordanian company from Safad, allegedly on the grounds of the city being within the Lebanese and Syrian area of defence.[35]

Further south, the town of Samakh and the police fortress at Gesher Bridge had fallen on April 29, soon after the British pull-out.

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[33] On the same day, the ALA attacked the Jewish settlement of Ramot Naftali, adjacent to the Lebanese border, to prevent a Jewish attack on Safad. Although the settlement was demolished, it remained in Jewish hands. See Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 108-09.

[34] Israel, Israel Army, Department of History in General Headquarters, *Toldot Melhemit Ha-Komaniyout* (History of the War of Independence) (Tel Aviv: Marachat, 1970), p. 124.

[35] For further information, see al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba*, I, 306-08; Major Edgar O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948* (New York: Praeger, 1957), pp. 47-48; and Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill*, p. 128.

On May 6, the Golani Brigade occupied the villages of Esh Shajara and ʿArab es Subeih but were unable to capture Lubiya to open the road connecting Sejera (Ilanya) and Tiberias, and Kefar Tavor (Masha) and Tiberias.[36]

The battle for the town of Beisan was initiated with the occupation of key positions surrounding the city. As early as April 28, the Golani Brigade had captured the army post and the train station north of the city. Then they captured Tell esh Shauk, Tel ʿAmal, Tall al-Hussun, and the villages of Es Samiriya, Farwana, and El Ashrafiya, thereby connecting together the Jewish settlements in the Beisan Valley and leaving Beisan itself completely besieged. On May 12, the town surrendered, and the following day its inhabitants were ordered to leave.[37]

The Haganah also took the offensive in Western Galilee, even though it was not included in the proposed Jewish state in Palestine. The occupation of Haifa was completed on April 22, 1948. Jewish convoys travelling north were safeguarded by the British stationed at Napoleon Hill outside the town of Acre and at St. James police station. On May 13, soon after the British had evacuated the area, the Carmeli Brigade set out to capture the Arab villages in Western Galilee.

As early as May 9, Israel Galili, one of the chief Zionist strategists in 1948, announced:

> it is our duty to break all sieges around our settlements and reach out to protect them.... There are no borders that separate our settlements in the whole land of Israel.[38]

By May 14, all of Western Galilee except the town of Acre had fallen into Jewish hands.[39]

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[36] Israel Army, *Toldot Melhemit Ha-Komaniyout*, pp. 138-40.

[37] Ephraim Talmi, *Lexicon Melhemit Ha-Itzmaout* ("A Lexicon of the War of Independence"), (3rd ed.; Tel Aviv: Davar, 1970), pp. 36-38.

[38] Yehuda Slutzky, *Sefer Toldot Ha-Haganah* ("History of the Haganah"), ed. by Ben-Zion Dinur (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1972), III, Part II, 1584.

[39] Talmi, *Lexicon Melhemit Ha-Itzmaout*, p. 40.

Arab Armies Enter Galilee, May 15, 1948

As early as April 30, 1948, the Arab commanders-in-chief of Egypt, Transjordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria, headed by King ʿAbdullah of Transjordan, concurred that "the defeat of the Jewish forces would necessitate the mobilization of no less than six fully equipped divisions under a single command."[40] The Arab League Political Committee thought these requirements exorbitant and felt that "massing present Arab forces on the borders would suffice to convince the big countries to intervene and force Israel to comply with Arab demands."[41]

But the collapse of Palestinian resistance, the fall of the main towns (Haifa, Jaffa, Tiberias and Safad) and of tens of Arab villages, and the consequent exodus of tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians into the neighbouring Arab countries forced Arab leaders to send units of their regular armies into Palestine upon the termination of the British Mandate on May 15, 1948.

Arab military strategy in Galilee, such as it was, was to isolate the Jewish settlements in the Hula Valley and Tiberias from reinforcements from the coast. Four forces were to carry out the plan:[42] Syrian and Lebanese units were to move from the north towards Nahariya, Safad and Nazareth, while Iraqi and Transjordanian units were to set out from Transjordan westwards along the Tiberias-Nazareth and Beisan-ʿAfula roads. But Arab forces squandered their efforts: King ʿAbdullah revised the plan (if there was one) and directed his forces toward the Ramallah-Jerusalem-Hebron area; on May 16, the Syrian force was ordered to move from its position at Bint Jubail, north of Safad, to the area of Samakh; soon after the fighting began the Iraqi contingent left its

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40 Al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba*, I, 283.

41 *Ibid.*, I, 283-84.

42 Cf. O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, pp. 88-89; Harry Sacher, *Israel: the Establishment of a State* (London: George Weidenfeld &Nicholson, 1952), p. 246; Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 163; al-ʿArif, *al-Nakba*, I, 288; al-Tall, *Karithat Filastin*, pp. 80-81; Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill*, p. 150; agree on the existence of such a plan. Lieutenant General Sir John Bagot Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957), p. 93 and Walid Khalidi, "Suqut Filastin" ("The Fall of Palestine"), *al-Thaqafa al-ʿArabiya* I, No. 1 (June 1957), p. 54; deny that a master plan as such ever existed.

position at Gesher and Belvoir, northeast of Beisan, for the Northern Triangle (Samaria).[43]

Immediately after the creation of Israel, fighting in Galilee began involving Syrian, Lebanese and — briefly — Iraqi forces, together with the ALA.[44] On May 15, the Syrian forces set out from El Hamma towards the Jordan Valley in three columns: the first was directed against Samakh, the second against the twin Jewish settlements of Deganiya and the third column was to cut the road connecting Beisan to Samakh.[45]

During the night of May 15, the Syrian forces shelled the Jewish settlement of ᶜEin Gev, on the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias. On May 17, a Syrian armoured unit, supported by artillery fire, set out to capture Samakh but was forced to retreat. A fierce fight erupted on the morning of May 18, leaving Samakh, Massada and Shaᶜar hag Golan in Syrian hands. An attempt by the third Palmach battalion of the Yiftah Brigade to recapture Samakh and the settlements during the night of May 18-19 was repulsed. At dawn on May 20, the Syrians advanced towards Deganiya A, to capture the bridge across the Jordan River, north of the settlement, but they were repulsed and forced to retreat east, abandoning Samakh, Massada and Sha'ar hag Golan.[46]

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[43] See al-ᶜArif, *al-Nakba*, I, 288-89; and Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 161-66.

[44] The involvement of the Iraqi forces in Galilee was limited, as they were transferred to Samaria after only five days of fighting. Although no official records are available as to the strength of the Syrian and Lebanese expeditionary forces, which fought only in Galilee, the figures given in most Zionist and Western sources are misleading. Lebanese forces for example, are estimated at 3,500 by Sacher, *Israel, The Establishment of a State*, p. 211, and O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, p. 81; while the Syrian forces are estimated as between 3,000 and 4,000 by Arthur Koestler, *Promise and Fulfillment: Palestine, 1917-1949* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1949), p. 205. According to Khalidi, however, *From Haven to Conquest*, Appendix IX-B, p. 867, the entire Syrian expeditionary force comprised one brigade of 1,876 men, and the Lebanese a single battalion of 700 men. Some ALA contingents, perhaps 500 men in all, operated alongside Lebanese forces in the second half of May. It was only later, in July 1948, that a larger ALA force, totalling some 2,000, moved into Arab Galilee (the area allotted to the Arabs according to the UN partition plan) and entered Nazareth.

[45] See O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, pp. 110-12. Zionist forces in the Jordan Valley at the beginning of the fighting were about one HISH brigade in addition to the armed settlers and Palmach units. See Israel Army, *Toldot Melhemit Ha-Komaniyout*, p. 167.

[46] For further information, see Israel Army, *Toldot Melhemit Ha-komaniyout*, pp. 168-73; Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 171-77; al-ᶜArif, *al-Nakba*, II, 354-64; and Moshe Pearlman, *The Army of Israel* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950) p. 140.

On June 10, 1948, the Syrian army captured the settlement of Mishmar hay Yarden, south of Lake Hula. Their attempt to advance and cut the road connecting Rosh Pinna with Hulata to the north and link their forces with the Lebanese army in the north and the ALA in the west was checked. Their attack on the settlement of ᶜEin Gev (also on June 10) was repulsed. The Syrian army obtained a foothold in Galilee but was unable to expand it partly because of lack of coordination with the other Arab forces.

Further south, the Iraqi forces set out during the night of May 14 from Mafraq, Transjordan, towards Wadi al-ᶜArab, overlooking the Jewish settlement of Gesher on the western bank of the Jordan River. During the same night, Israeli forces demolished the Rutenberg Bridge and the bridge between Naharayim and Gesher.[47] The following morning, the Iraqi army built a pontoon bridge on the Jordan River and initiated its assault by occupying the "camel stronghold" overlooking Gesher. The following day, the Iraqis attempted to capture the settlement but were repulsed. On May 17, an Iraqi infantry company was dispatched westward to occupy the settlement of Belvoir. Simultaneously another unit attacked Gesher from the north, supported by an armoured unit from the south. Although the Israelis were able to repulse both units, Gesher remained besieged until the Iraqis left their positions on May 20 to take over the ALA's positions in the Triangle.[48]

In the Hula area, the Yiftah Brigade occupied the villages of El Malikiya and Qadas on May 14. An immediate counterattack by the Lebanese forced them to retreat. On May 16-17, a Palmach battalion occupied the village of En Nabi Yusha, connecting El Manara with Ramot Naftali, isolating the Lebanese army from the Syrians in the Hula Valley. During the following day, an Israeli force set out from El Manara towards El Malikiya by way of Lebanese roads. The Lebanese did not expect an attack from the rear, and after a short battle, they were forced to retreat. On June 6, the Lebanese took the offensive, forcing the Israelis out of El Malikiya, Qadas and Ramot Naftali, opening once again the northern gate into Galilee. However, after this battle, the Lebanese army carried out no further operations.[49]

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47 Al-ᶜArif, *al-Nakba*, II, 375.

48 *Ibid.*, II, 377-81.

49 See Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 178-79.

In Western Galilee, the city of Acre remained in Arab hands and an obstacle to Israeli control over the area. On May 16, the Haganah (knowing that the besieged Arab population was demoralized because of their isolation and extreme military weakness) took the offensive and captured the city on May 17.[50]

The ALA entrenched themselves once again in Lower Galilee soon after the Lebanese had opened the gate to Galilee with the occupation of El Malikiya.[51] The ALA took the initiative and planned to attack the southeastern section of the Jewish settlement of Migdal, north of Tiberias, to cut off traffic to the north in aid of the Zionist forces fighting the Syrians. To prevent this, on the night of June 9, a battalion of the Golani brigade advanced towards the village of Lubiya and occupied its southernmost part. Its objectives were: to open the road connecting Sejera (Ilanya) with Tiberias, to disrupt the ALA's communications with the city of Nazareth, and to lessen Arab pressure on the settlement of Migdal. At dawn on June 11, the ALA, feeling threatened, decided to shift their attack on Sejera (Ilanya) in order to maintain communications with Nazareth. Fierce fighting erupted which forced the Golani battalion to withdraw from Lubiya. Key positions north and west of Sejera, dominating the main road which connected Sejera (Ilanya) with Kefar Tavor (Mas-ha) fell into Arab hands. The fighting continued throughout the day, then the ALA retreated, ending this phase of the war with the first United Nations truce on June 11, 1948.[52]

Galilee During the Truces: June 11 to October 31, 1948

The first United Nations truce lasted from June 11 to July 10, 1948. It was accepted by both sides with the principle of "no military advantages." The Israelis welcomed it as a breathing period and put it to good use by centralizing their civil apparatus and regrouping and

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[50] Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill*, p. 129.

[51] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 185. The ALA had been ordered by King ʿAbdullah to leave Lower Galilee for Damascus so that it could be reorganized into a more regular army. It was to have been equipped by the Lebanese and put under the command of Colonel ʿArif Shuqair (with Qawuqji technically their commander). Lower Galilee was to be safeguarded by the Arab Legion and the other regular Arab forces. Letter from King ʿAbdullah to Fauzi al-Qawuqji, May 18, 1948, The Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[52] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 189-90.

reorganizing their forces. Israeli regional brigades were replaced with four military fronts, each larger than a brigade.[53] The Palmach Brigade, commanded by Colonel Allon, was transferred from Galilee to the Latrun area, replaced by the newly-formed Anglo-Saxon Brigade. Furthermore, the Israelis reorganized their army along more conventional lines; ranks, a pay scale, officers' messes, and a disciplinary code were introduced. More war supplies were flown into Israel from Czechoslovakia. American Flying Fortresses and British Bean Fighters were smuggled into the country, manned by American, British and South African airmen. The truce was very well utilized, and by July 9, the Israelis were ready for action.

The Arabs were neither as efficient nor as successful. Although they attempted to resupply and reinforce their armies, they could not manufacture ammunition. The western countries (on whom the Arabs depended for their military supplies) refused to sell them arms in keeping with the United Nations Security Council resolution of May 29, which forbade the sale of arms to both parties. Furthermore, the Arabs did not have direct contacts with East European countries. The four week truce was too short to organize a world-wide organization for arms supply. Nevertheless, the Syrian and Lebanese forces, through extensive recruiting campaigns, increased their manpower.[54]

The ALA, which was stationed in Upper Galilee on a front of about 134 kilometers, with access to eleven main roads leading to seven Israeli military bases, was reorganized and reduced to almost half its strength of about 2,000 men. Qawuqji complained about the reduction, reporting that it would not solve the financial problem of armament since they had had shortages in arms ever since the beginning of the war. Qawuqji pointed out that the reduction of the ALA strength would lead to a retreat to the Lebanese borders. This, he suggested, would result in

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[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 277-80. These fronts were organized to create more flexibility in the army's movement and command. They were disposed as follows: the northern front, covering Galilee and the northern border of the Samarian Triangle; a western front extending from Zikhron Yaʿaqov to Petah Tiqva; a central front covering Tel Aviv and Jerusalem; and a southern front extending from Nes Tsiyona (Wadi Hunein), including all the territory south and eastwards from the Mediterranean to the Gulf of ʿAqaba. O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, p. 132.

[54] O'Ballance, *The Arab Israeli War, 1948*, p. 137.

the loss of Galilee and an increase of 100,000 more refugees for whom the Arab governments would have to be responsible.[55]

Elsewhere, little activity was reported on the Egyptian front during the truce. Gamal ᶜAbdul-Nasser reported: "As staff officer of the 6th Battalion, I soon began more than anybody else to realize the bewilderment and incompetence which characterized our High Command."[56] With regard to the Arab Legion, the truce period was not utilized to strengthen and organize the army. Taufiq Pasha, Prime Minister of Transjordan, believed that there would be no further fighting, and thus no money was invested in strengthening the army.[57]

The Period Between the Two Truces: July 4 to July 18, 1948

On July 9, 1948, the Israelis initiated the "ten-day offensive" against the Syrians in Eastern Galilee and against the ALA in Central Galilee. As planned in Operation Barosh, an Israeli force of 2,000, divided into four columns, attacked the Syrians. The plan of attack was as follows:

> The first column was to cross Lake Huleh, from Hulata to Dardara (both Israeli-held) and from there, first take the heights around Dabura (Syrian-held) and then push on and cut the road from Mishmar hay Yarden to the Syrian base to the east. The second column was to move from Hulata southwards along the shores of the lake to the River Jordan, where it was about a hundred yards wide, just south of the lake itself, bridge and cross it. The column was then to advance and cut the same road from Mishmar hay Yarden eastwards, a little to the west of where the first column was due to cut it. The third column was to move forward to some high ground covering the Syrian bridgehead, to the west of it, and to open up a holding-attack to cover the river crossing of the second column. The fourth column was to act in conjunction with the third column, and was to take up a position just a little to the south, also covering the Syrian positions.[58]

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[55] Letter from Fauzi al-Qawuqji to ᶜAbdul-Rahman ᶜAzzam, August 5, 1948, The Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[56] Gamal ᶜAbdul-Nasser, "Memoirs of the First Palestine War," translated and annotated by Walid Khalidi, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. II, No. 2 (Winter, 1973), p. 11.

[57] Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, pp. 143 and 145.

[58] O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, pp. 151-52.

This plan was to prevent a link up between the Syrian army and the ALA in Lower Galilee and the Syrians and Lebanese army in the Hula at El Malikiya. On July 10, the Syrians began their counterattack and forced the second, third and fourth Israeli columns to retreat. (Another Syrian force attacked the few Israelis that had crossed the Jordan River, forcing them to retreat with heavy casualties). During the following day, the Syrian army attacked the first column in the heights of Dabura (in Syria) but were unable to regain the Israeli-held position.[59]

In Lower Galilee, the Israelis occupied a narrow strip through the Plain of Esdraelon, from Haifa to Beisan, and the coastal plain north of Acre, which were threatened by the Arabs entrenched in the hills to the northeast.[60] At the same time, the Israeli high command decided that it was essential to broaden the coastal strip eastwards (to safeguard the Zebulun Valley) and to occupy the city of Nazareth.[61] Operation Dekel was launched on July 9, 1948 with the occupation of Tall Kiswan (about five kilometers east of the Haifa-Acre-Nahariya road), overlooking the main road leading to the village of El Birwa eastward. To the east of the Haifa-Acre-Nahariya road, the Israelis occupied the villages of El Makr, Judeida, Abu Sinan, Kafr Yasif, and Kuweikat, thus securing the Zebulun Valley. Turning eastward along the El Birwa-Er Rama road, however, they met strong resistance and were forced to stop short of occupying the village of Majd el Kurum.

The big offensive to capture the city of Nazareth began during the night of July 13 with the occupation of Shafa ʿAmr, thus opening the road southeast to Nazareth. On July 14, an Israeli force positioned at Nahalal, southwest of Nazareth, made a diversionary attack and captured the villages of Maʿlul and ʿIlut, west of Nazareth, thus connecting the settlement of Kefar ha Horesh with the rest of the Jewish settlements south of Nazareth.[62]

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[59] For further information, see Talmi, *Lexicon Melhemit Ha-Itzmaout*, pp. 44-46; and Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 314-19.

[60] O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, p. 155.

[61] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 322-23.

[62] This diversionary attack mistakenly convinced Qawuqji that the Israelis were going to attack from the south or southwest, the direction of the Jezreel Valley. Therefore, southern Nazareth was well defended but not the northern sector where the Israelis had massed their troops for the attack. See *Ibid.*, pp. 324-25.

At nightfall on July 15, the main force of the Israeli army set out from Shafa ʿAmr towards the village of Saffuriya (it was from this village that Shaikh Qassim set out on his operations during the 1936-39 Palestinian Revolt) which fell at dawn on July 16. Proceeding to Nazareth, the Israelis met with little resistance, and the city surrendered before midnight, July 16, 1948. A mopping up operation was carried out, capturing the villages along the El Birwa-Er Rama road and those along the Shafa ʿAmr-El Birwa road.

To the north of Nazareth, the Israelis captured the villages of Er Reina, Mash-had, Kafr Kanna, Esh Shajara, Turʿan and Lubiya, thus opening the road connecting Nazareth with Tiberias. On July 18, the day the second United Nations truce began, the Israelis continued their offensive and occupied the villages of ʿEin Mahil, northeast of Nazareth, and Nimrin, to the north of Lubiya.[63]

The second United Nations truce, which was not subject to a time limit, went into effect on July 18, and was considered by both parties as merely a "cease-fire."[64] Israel's policy was, "Truce is not peace. Be prepared." The Israeli military command disagreed with Ben-Gurion's acceptance of the truce and urged an all-out fight until victory.[65]

Unlike the Arabs, the Israelis utilized the truce to complete the reorganization of their commands into four fronts:

> Aleph (A) in the north, Bet (B) in the center, Gimel (C) for Jerusalem and its corridor, Dalet (D) in the south. Each frontal command was organized so as to enable it to direct operations in its area; GHQ was thus relieved of the need to handle directly an excessive number of formations.[66]

The "Garrison Brigades" were also reorganized "to enable them to take over responsibility for their respective areas, thus releasing the 'Infantry Brigades,' successors to HISH, from all responsibility for

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[63] For further information, see Talmi, *Lexicon Melhemit Ha-Itzmaout*, pp. 87-88; Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 322-28; and O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, pp. 155-60.

[64] Although the Arab states (except Syria and Iraq) accepted the truce, they rejected its indefinite duration as detrimental to the Arab cause and asked for a specified duration. O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, p. 166.

[65] *Ibid.*, pp. 165-66.

[66] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 386.

defence operations."[67] Zahal (the Israel Defence Force) was increased from almost 60,000 at the end of the first United Nations truce, to almost 90,000 by the end of the second United Nations truce.[68] A considerable proportion of the new recruits came from Mahal (volunteers from abroad) and Gahal (immigrants) who made their way into Israel in mid-1948.[69]

Regarding arms and ammunition, the Israelis initiated Operation Balak during the truce to airlift Czechoslovakian arms to Israel.

> Eleven flights arrived that week [the first of the second UN truce], with almost fifty tons of freight. For a few more weeks the operation continued in full swing, transporting to Israel the balance of the Messerschmitts, reserve propellers, raw material for "Ta'as" (the military industry) and considerable quantities of armaments, including Bezas, etc...[70]

Furthermore, 450 Browning machine guns and 65 Vickers were flown to Israel from Mexico,[71] in addition to

> A quantity of French-type 75-mm. field guns... [and a] high-octane fuel from Mexico [which] was an important factor in the success of Operation *Avak* [against the Egyptians in the Negev] and the subsequent activities of the I.A.F. [Israel Air Force] in Operation *Yoav* [also against the Egyptians].[72]

Upon the fall of Nazareth, the ALA withdrew northwards to hold a 15 by 20 mile rectangle in the mountainous area of Upper Galilee. It was reorganized into three units, distributed as follows: Yarmuk I, based in Tarshiha, to secure Western Galilee; Yarmuk II, in Saʿsaʿ and Jish, to guard Eastern Galilee; and Yarmuk III, positioned below the Acre-Safad road to the south.

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[67] *Ibid.*

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 387.

[69] *Ibid.*, pp. 388-93.

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 394.

[71] This equipment was "purchased considerably earlier in Hawaii from the U.S.A.F. surplus at the end of fighting in the Pacific," but could not be shipped from the U.S. because of the embargo the U.S. put on all warlike materials. *Ibid.*, pp. 395-96.

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 396.

In view of the strategic importance of this area[73] the Israeli high command decided to eliminate the ALA and occupy Upper Galilee. At dusk on October 28, 1948, the commander of the Northern Front[74] was ordered to carry out Operation Hiram[75] which was completed within sixty hours, after which all of Galilee was in Israeli hands.

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[73] The ALA was not bound by the UN truce, and on October 22, it reoccupied the hill of Shaikh ʿAbid, overlooking the settlement of El Manara, then blocked the road connecting El Manara with El Malikiya. Although the Israeli force attempted to push the ALA back into Lebanese territory, it was repulsed, and the settlement at El Manara remained besieged. See Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 444-46.

[74] Four brigades were under Colonel Carmel's command during the operation: the "New Brigade," including an armoured battalion, Oded, Golani, and Carmeli. *Ibid.*, pp. 447-48.

[75] The operation was divided into the following phases: one column moved from Lubiya in the south towards the village of ʿEilabun; another from the Nahariya, Kabri area in the west towards Tarshiha; a third column set out from En Nabi Yusha' in the north towards Lebanon; and the main body advanced from Safad and captured the vital crossroads at Saʿsaʿ. For further details, see Talmi, *Lexicon Melhemet Ha-Itzmaout*, pp. 138-41; Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 450-56; and O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948*, pp. 186-92.

CHAPTER III

OCCUPATION AND DISPERSION: GALILEE BEFORE THE TERMINATION OF THE BRITISH MANDATE

The Jewish offensive in Galilee was initiated with the siege of the city of Tiberias[1] which brought about the first eviction of large numbers of Arabs from their homes in Galilee, this prior to the withdrawal of the British from the city.

The Jewish population of Tiberias lived on the periphery of the city, with only a minority residing among the Arab inhabitants in the old city along the Sea of Galilee. Strategically, the Jews were in a much better position, overlooking and surrounding the old city except on the lakefront.[2]

Soon after the partition plan was approved, the Jews in Tiberias began distributing a newspaper, *Haqiqat al-Amr* ("The Real Situation"), aimed at undermining the Palestinians' trust in their leaders and urging Arab-Jewish cooperation. On the other hand, the Jewish paramilitary organizations distributed leaflets warning the Arab inhabitants of Tiberias not to cooperate with "militant" Arabs or to hinder the implementation of the partition plan.[3] These threats were accompanied by sporadic disturbances which increased during the months of March and April, 1948. On March 2, Zionist soldiers attacked the adjacent village of El Manara (a village of 490 Arab

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[1] The city of Tiberias had a population estimated on December 31, 1944 at 11,310 — 5,310 Arabs and 6,000 Jews. All population estimates given in Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945* are as of December 31, 1944, and all ownership of land is as registered on April 1, 1945, as quoted throughout.

[2] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence,* p. 101.

[3] Eyewitness Khalil al-Tabari, a landowner from Tiberias, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, January 22, 1973.

inhabitants),[4] chased its inhabitants out, destroyed some houses, and left leaflets behind warning the inhabitants not to return because the village had been mined.[5]

From April 3 to 6 the Zionists besieged Tiberias itself, cutting it off from all contacts, except during a British-supervised truce. On April 10, the Zionists attacked the adjoining village of Nasr-ed-Din (with 90 Arab inhabitants)[6] and destroyed all its houses, killing some of its inhabitants, including women and children, and expelling all the rest.[7]

The people of Tiberias were not prepared to withstand a full-scale attack. The city's strength was estimated at one hundred men (including about 30 ALA irregulars), armed with 90 rifles of various makes, three or four machine guns, ten Sten guns, two 60-mm. guns with 10 to 15 shells, a mortar, 50 to 60 hand grenades, many pistols and hunting rifles, and 50 to 70 rounds of ammunition for each man.[8]

During the night of April 17-18, HISH forces and a Palmach company split the old city of Tiberias in two.[9] Insecure and terrified, the Arabs demanded that the British break the siege, that the ALA withdraw from the city to avoid further fighting, and that the city be put under British protection.[10] In response, the British issued a decree

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[4] Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 72.

[5] Khalil al-Tabari, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, January 23, 1973.

[6] Palestine, *Village Statistics,* 1945, p. 72.

[7] I was given the names of seven killed and three injured. Interview with Khalil al-Tabari, Beirut, Lebanon, January 23, 1973; and Mustafa Sahtut, formerly a teacher, Beirut, Lebanon, February 7, 1973.

[8] Interview with Mustafa Sahtut, January 22, 1973 and February 6, 1973.

On March 3, 1948, the Arab League Military Committee advised Muhammad Kamal al-Tabari of Tiberias to form a local garrison in Tiberias consisting of 30 local irregulars and 30 volunteers with a salary of eight and a half Palestinian pounds a month, that the garrison would have 30 rifles with 150 rounds of ammunition for each rifle and 200 hand grenades, and that 200 rounds of ammunition were to be distributed to the city's militia.

Letter from General Ismaʿil Safwat, Chairman of the Military Committee, to Muhammad Kamal al-Tabari, The Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[9] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence,* p. 103. I was told that many civilians were killed. I was given the names of 26 men and women killed and 3 wounded by Khalil al-Tabari, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, January 24, 1973; and Mustafa Sahtut, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, February 7, 1973.

[10] These demands were made by the leaders of the Arab community in Tiberias who met on April 17 with Muhammad Kamal al-Tabari, head of the military garrison of Tiberias, at Dair al-Latin (the Latin Convent). Khalil al-Tabari, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, January 24, 1973.

announcing that they would continue to be responsible for the Arab population of Tiberias for an additional three days. Under these circumstances, the Arabs decided to utilize the British protection to flee the besieged city.[11]

> The roads, they said, were jammed with trucks, cars, wagons and push-carts filled with panic-stricken Arabs. The British army imposed a curfew on the Jewish quarters between 3 and 6 p.m. [*sic*] while the last vehicles, including a convoy of 30 trucks, were escorted out of the town by the army. By the morning of 19 April, Tiberias was free of Arabs.[12]

The Rev. ᶜAbdullah Sayigh, a native of Tiberias, recounted the Arab evacuation of the city:

> We had two alternatives, to go to Nazareth or to Samakh. We chose to go to Nazareth. We could not stay in the city and protect ourselves. We were able to leave the city unharmed and without another Deir Yasin.... We stayed about two weeks in Nazareth and then decided to go to Beirut to join my sons. On our way we met the people of Safad fleeing their homes.... Together we left to Lebanon.[13]

Ghuweir Abu Shusha

On April 24, the Palmach extended its offensive in Eastern Galilee to the villages of Jaᶜuna, Et Tabigha, and Ghuweir Abu Shusha, among others, forcing their Arab inhabitants to flee from their homes.

Ghuweir Abu Shusha is about eight kilometers north of the city of Tiberias. It had a population of 1,240 Arabs[14] and a total land area of 12,098 dunums.[15]

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[11] See al-ᶜArif, *al-Nakba,* I, 202-05.

[12] Robert John and Sami Hadawi, *The Palestine Diary, 1914-1948* (Beirut: The Palestine Research Center, 1970), II, 331.

[13] The Rev. ᶜAbdullah Sayigh, a Presbyterian minister, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, February 7, 1973.

[14] I was told that the village was inhabited by three tribes: ᶜArab al-Talawiya, ᶜArab al-Kharamba, and ᶜArab al-Sumairi. The village mukhtar was Fayiz Khamis of the ᶜArab al-Talawiya, who was assisted by Hassan Muhammad Jumᶜa of the ᶜArab al-Kharamba and Hassan Ismaᶜil of the ᶜArab al-Sumairi. Hussain ᶜAli Yusif, a native of Ghuweir Abu Shusha, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, March 6, 1973.

[15] 8,609 dunums belonged to the Arabs; 3,439 to the Jews (residing in the nearby settlement of Genossar), and 50 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 72.

Although the villagers were close to Tiberias, its occupation did not frighten them. Hussain ᶜAli Yusif, a farmer and a member of the village militia, reported:

> The fall of Tiberias did not worry us because we knew that the Arab people of Tiberias were surrounded by Jewish settlements in all directions. They had no choice but to surrender and evacuate the city.[16]

Soon after the fall of Tiberias, Mukhtar Fayiz Khamis and Hussain ᶜAli Yusif left for the village of Er Rama to meet with Father Yaqub Hanna.[17] Together they decided to go to Safsaf to ask Adib Shishakli, commander of the Yarmuk II Battalion of the ALA, for rifles and ammunition. They assured Shishakli that with arms and ammunition, the villagers of Ghuweir Abu Shusha would stop the Jewish supply convoys travelling on the Tiberias-Rosh Pinna road from reaching the settlements in Eastern Galilee and the Hula Valley and threatening Safad. Hussain ᶜAli Yusif related what happened at the meeting:

> Although Shishakli appreciated our villages' strategic location, he claimed that he had no orders to supply the villagers with arms and ammunition. He suggested that we go to Syria and present our case to the Military Committee in Damascus. We argued with him, but he adamantly refused to give us arms. We asked him: "You have no orders to arm the villages. Do you have orders to surrender them to the Jews?"[18]

Upon the return of Mukhtar Fayiz Khamis and Hussain ᶜAli Yusif to the village empty-handed, the villagers began to flee northwards to Er Rama with their women, children, and old men. Only the armed men, estimated at forty-eight,[19] sharing between them some 35 to 40 assorted rifles, with 20 to 50 rounds of ammunition for each man, remained in the village.[20]

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[16] Hussain ᶜAli Yusif, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 6, 1973.

[17] Hussain ᶜAli Yusif told me that some of the land in the village was owned by the people of Er Rama. *Ibid.*, March 6, 1973.

[18] *Ibid.*, March 7, 1973.

[19] Only three men had any military training, according to Khalid al-Muᶜari, a farmer and a member of the village militia, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 6, 1973.

[20] Muhammad Ibrahim Salih, a farmer and a member of the village militia, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 6, 1973.

On April 22, 1948, a Jewish delegate, representing the neighbouring settlements of Migdal and Genossar, requested to meet with the village mukhtar. During the afternoon, Mukhtar Fayiz Khamis, accompanied by Hilal ʿAbdul-Hadi and Hussain ʿAli Yusif, went to ʿAli Salih's field, south of the village, and met the Jewish representatives. Hussain ʿAli Yusif related what happened:

> We met with ʿAbada, a Yemeni Jew and the mukhtar of Genossar, who had often visited us. With him were Ishaq, mukhtar of Migdal, and Abu Musa, a Jewish friend of mine who sometimes took Arabic lessons together with my son. ʿAbada apologetically told us that the Jewish army planned to take over the road from Tiberias to Rosh Pinna. He advised us to leave to the village of Er Rama, which he remarked was to be part of the Arab state according to the United Nations partition plan; or to leave to Syria to the east; or to confront the Jewish army which would inflict heavy suffering on the villagers.... We told them that we would not surrender, nor would we leave our village (although most of the villagers had left, and we did not know if the Jews knew it). We assured them that our men would not attack Jewish convoys on the roads unless we were attacked first. We left convinced that they planned to attack our village. We told our armed men to sleep west of the village to avoid being trapped when the Jews attacked.[21]

At dawn on April 24, the village was attacked by the Palmach. Muhammad Ibrahim Salih reported:

> We were asleep west of the village that night and were surprised when we returned to the village at dawn to see it in Jewish hands. We did not attack the Jews because our families were out of the village and there was no one in the village to protect. We infiltrated into the village at night to bring out a few of our belongings.[22]

The people of Ghuweir Abu Shusha remained in Er Rama (but often infiltrated back to their village) until it too fell to the Israelis. Hussain ʿAli Yusif related what happened when Er Rama fell to the Jews:

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[21] Hussain ʿAli Yusif, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 7, 1973.

[22] Muhammad Ibrahim Salih, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 8, 1973.

> The people in Er Rama were ordered to assemble at the center of the village. A Jewish soldier stood on the top of a rise and addressed us. He ordered the Druze present among us to go back to their homes, suggesting that they report to him in case any of their possessions were missing. Then he ordered the rest of us to leave to Lebanon, threatening death to those taking any of their belongings with them. Although I was given permission to stay by my friend, Abu Musa, I could not remain without the rest of my tribe who were forced to flee.[23]

ʿEin ez Zeitun

Upon the occupation of Tiberias and its environs, the Haganah, as envisaged in Plan Dalet, proceeded into the Hula Valley to carry out operation Yiftah, named for one of the Judges, Jephtah, who made his home across the Jordan from Upper Galilee. Yiftah's objectives were:

> (a) to capture key positions from the enemy;[24] (b) to gain control of major arteries; (c) to organize Galilee for defence against future invasion. Implementation of *Yiftah* was entrusted to the High Command of the Palmach. The Palmach commander [Yigal Allon] was to be given control of all settlements in the area with one Palmach and one HISH battalion. Later, a second Palmach battalion was added to those forces.[25]

Operation Yiftah was initiated on April 28, 1948 with the occupation of the Rosh Pinna police fortress upon its evacuation by the British.[26] On May 1, a Palmach unit set out from its base on Mount Canaʾan and captured the villages of Firʿim, Biriya and ʿEin ez Zeitun, north of Safad, thereby opening a route between Rosh Pinna and the Jewish quarter of Safad.

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[23] Eyewitness Hussain ʿAli Yusif, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 6, 1973.

[24] Haganah's main objective was to occupy the police fortress at En Nabi Yusha in the Hula Valley, and the police fortress on Mount Canaʿan, the Citadel, the municipal police station, and Shalva House in and surrounding Safad. As early as April 15, HISH soldiers of the Golani Brigade attempted to capture the police fortress at En Nabi Yusha but were repulsed. Once more on April 20, a Palmach unit advanced on the fortress but again was repulsed with heavy casualties. Slutzky, *Sefer Toldot Ha-Haganah*, III, 1580-81.

[25] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 108.

[26] During the same period, Golani units captured the town of Samakh at the southern end of Lake Tiberias, forcing its inhabitants to flee east to Syria.

ʿEin ez Zeitun is a village on the northern outskirts of the city of Safad, which had a population of 820 Arabs and a total land area of 1,100 dunums.[27]

The people of ʿEin ez Zeitun were almost all farmers who tilled their own land. It was only a short distance to Safad, and they depended on its markets to sell their produce and buy their supplies. They often travelled to Safad on business, to visit a physician, or to purchase medicine. They were also neighbours to the Jews of ʿEin Zeitim, to the north, who often passed through their village on the way to the Jewish quarter of Safad.

The people of ʿEin ez Zeitun first heard the news of the Arab-Jewish fighting over the radio belonging to Ibrahim Abdul-Rahman Khatib, mukhtar of the village. Ahmad Hussain Hamid, an inhabitant of the village and formerly a policeman, related what happened when the villagers first heard the news of the Deir Yasin massacre.[28]

> Although we continued to ignore the Jewish threat, we were distressed about the massacre at Deir Yasin, followed by the Jewish victories and the Arab flight from Tiberias and Haifa. We had between 50 and 60 men,[29] armed with 40 to 50 rifles of different kinds, one or two machine guns, and with 25 to 35 rounds of ammunition for each man.[30]

During the night of May 1, 1948, a Palmach unit, with mules loaded with ammunition, advanced towards the village of ʿEin ez Zeitun by way of Tall al Durraiyat, which overlooks the village to the north. From the top of the hill, Palmach soldiers rolled barrels filled with explosives

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[27] 1,054 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 46 were listed as "public property". Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 69.

[28] On April 9, 1948, an armed force composed mostly of the Irgun and the Stern Gang, attacked the village of Deir Yasin near Jerusalem and massacred 250 villagers, including women and children. For further information, see Jacques de Reynier, *A Jérusalem un drapeau flottait sur la ligne de feu* (Neuchâtel: Éditions de la Baconnière, 1950), pp. 69-74; Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel,* p. 91; Jon Kimche, *Seven Fallen Pillars; The Middle East, 1915-1950* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1950), pp. 217-18 and 222-24; and Joseph, *The Faithful City,* pp. 71-72.

[29] Only nine of the villagers had military training, having served in the British Police Corps or the Transjordanian Frontier Force. Their names were given me by Ahmad Hussain Hamid, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebahon, February 5, 1973.

[30] *Ibid.,* February 12, 1973.

down the hill to the village and threw hand grenades, killing and injuring many of the villagers.[31]

In the early hours of the morning, the village's armed men began to retreat as Palmach soldiers proceeded to encircle the village. Almost all the old men, women, and children remained in the village because the villagers had previously agreed among themselves not to leave. The men with rifles meanwhile retreated, leaving their wives and children behind.[32] In the village, Palmach soldiers ordered the villagers to assemble at Mahmud Hamid's courtyard. Then the women were separated from the men and were taken to a courtyard behind the village mosque near Abu Rida's house. Muhammad Ahmad Hamid, a mechanic and a member of the village militia, related what happened:

> I decided not to leave the village as we retreated. Instead, I hid in a nearby stable, close to my house. I remained in hiding for a while and then decided to join the people assembled at Mahmud Hamid's courtyard.... As I was crossing the street, I was caught. The Jewish soldiers took me to the center of the village, near the spring of ʿEin ez Zeitun from which the village derives its name. There I saw Jamil Ahmad Idris crucified on a tree. I was beaten and questioned, then I was ordered to join the men in the courtyard.[33]

Mansur Shaibi and his wife decided to remain in the village, but they were afraid to surrender.

> We were terrified and decided to remain in our house with some of our relatives. We were afraid to surrender because Rashid Shaibi, who was hiding with us, told us he had seen ʿAbdullaj Shaibi killed as he was trying to surrender. Fearful of being found disobeying orders, we decided to send Umm Ibrahim, the midwife and the eldest among us, outside, carrying a white scarf... We were happy to be sent to join the rest of the villagers.[34]

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[31] Eyewitnesses Mansur Shaibi and his wife, Munira Hamid Shaibi, gave me the names of eight men and women killed. Beirut, Lebanon, February 8 and 11, 1973. Ahmad Hussain Hamid also included two others among those killed and one wounded.

[32] Ahmad Hussain Hamid, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 12, 1973.

[33] Muhammad Ahmad Hamid, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, February 8, 1973.

[34] Mansur Shaibi and his wife Munira Hamid Shaibi, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, February 11, 1973.

At the courtyard, the Jewish soldiers kept threatening to shoot them.

> Yusif Ahmad Hajjar suddenly stood up, addressing the soldiers. "Our village has been captured, we have surrendered, and we expect to be treated humanely." He threatened the soldiers, if they did not treat them well that the villagers would help in burning the Jews when the Arab armies entered Palestine. A Palmach officer slapped Yusif in the face and ordered his soldiers to choose thirty-seven teen-aged boys at random,[35] ordering the rest of the villagers to move into the storage rooms of the mosque.[36]

Those taken away were never seen again:

> I do not know what happened to our young men. We have been away from ʿEin ez Zeitun now for almost 25 years, and still I don't know what happened to them. I feel my brother is still alive somewhere.[37]
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> I do not think my brother is alive. I think the Jews killed him. Why would the Jews keep him for so long? What use is he to them?[38]

The women and the children were escorted by Palmach soldiers to the western edge of the village. They were ordered to leave the village; then the Zionists began firing over their heads, making them run. At night, the men assembled in the village courtyard were told that their wives and children had decided to leave the village, and they were given the choice of joining them or being killed. They were led by Palmach soldiers to Wadi al-Kharrar, to the west of the village. The villagers ran in panic westwards along Wadi al-Tahuna, looking for their wives and children. Many of the villagers rejoined their families en route to the village of Meirun and northwards along the road to the village of Safsaf.

The people of ʿEin ez Zeitun were forced out of their village without being able to take any of their belongings with them. Although the Palmach soldiers had threatened to shoot anyone who returned to the

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[35] Eyewitnesses Muhammad Ahmad Hamid, Mansur Shaibi, Ahmad Hussain Hamid, and Hussain ʿAli Hamid told me the names of 24 of these. One of them, Zakariya Hamid, had asked the soldiers to take him in place of his son, Hussain Zakaria Hamid. The Palmach officer in charge ordered them both to be taken. Interview at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon and Beirut, Lebanon, February 8, 1973.

[36] Muhammad Ahmad Hamid, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, February 9, 1973.

[37] Mansur Shaibi, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, February 8, 1973.

[38] Munira Hamid Shaibi, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, February 8, 1973.

village, six villagers decide to return two days after they had been driven out. Hussain ʿAli Hamid, one of the villagers who attempted to return, recalled:

> We went back to get the money that we had buried in our courtyards. Rashid Khalil, the first to enter the village, was shot dead by a Jewish soldier. We saw it was too dangerous to go in and decided to leave to Lebanon.[39]

On May 3 and 4, the Palmach amplified Operation Yiftah by carrying out Operation Matateh ("Broom") to clear the remaining villages along the road between Rosh Pinna and Tiberias of their Arab inhabitants, thereby connecting the Jewish settlements in the Hula Valley with those in Eastern Galilee and simultaneously eliminating the Syrian threat to Eastern Galilee.[40]

Et Tabigha and Es Samakiya

Et Tabigha is a village in Eastern Galilee, about nine kilometers north of Tiberias on the main Tiberias-Safad road. It had a population of 330 Arabs and a land area of 5,389 dunums.[41] Es Samakiya is about three kilometers north of Et Tabigha.It had a population of 380 Arabs and a land area of 10,526 dunums.[42]

The people of Et Tabigha were dismayed by the fall of Tiberias. They were afraid that the shelling of their village would now increase as Zionist convoys passed it. Although the villagers had not disturbed the Zionist convoys travelling north to the settlement of Rosh Pinna, Zionist shelling continued to plague the village, killing three persons on one occasion.[43] In revenge, the villagers seized a disabled Zionist armoured car loaded with food and medical supplies and took it to the

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[39] Hussain ʿAli Hamid, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 14, 1973.

[40] See Talmi, *Lexicon Melhemit Ha-Itzmaout*, pp. 40-42.

[41] 5,287 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 102 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 73. This includes the hamlets of Tell el Hudud and Khan al-Minya.

[42] 10,474 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 52 dunums were listed as "public property." *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[43] Eyewitnesses, Ahmad Yusif ʿAli, interviewed at Khan al-Shaikh Camp, Syria, April 27, 1973; and Ahmad Shahadah Muhammad, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, April 26, 1973.

village of Maghar, where the ALA was positioned. The villagers had hoped that they would be given a few rifles in return for their efforts, but instead they were sent to Shishakli at Safsaf, then to Sari Fnaish, commander of the Transjordanian detachment of the ALA at Safad who adamantly refused to give them arms. Ahmad Yusif ʿAli, mukhtar of Et Tabigha, reported:

> Our tribe was very poorly armed. We had three hunting rifles. I had travelled to Syria on three different occasions to ask the Mufti for arms. The last time I went was a week before the village was captured... with me were Abu Hussain of Es Samra, Abu Saʿid al-Hittini and Asmar Mahmoud of El Qudeiriya, and ʿAbdullah al-Khadrah of Et Tabigha. We were refused a meeting with the Mufti. We were asked to write down what arms we needed. We waited almost three hours... our papers were returned to us with a note written on the back saying, "Sorry, we have no arms."[44]

The people of Et Tabigha expected retaliation by the Jews. As they knew they could not withstand an attack, they decided to flee to Syria. On their way, they were met by the people of Es Samakiya at Talhum, an area southeast of Es Samakiya. Hassan Mahmud Abu Qutun, a farmer from Es Samakiya, witnessed the flight of the villagers of Et Tabigha.

> We were disheartenedwhen we saw them [the villagers of Et Tabigha] fleeing. They were troubled and anxious to cross over to Syria. We stopped them, and our mukhtar, Asʿad Saʿid, convinced them to stay with us. Our trible had five rifles... together we thought we could protect ourselves. Several times we helped the villagers of Et Tabigha, going back to their village to get some of their belongings.[45]

On May 4, however, smoke was seen rising from the village of Et Tabigha. Salim Saʿid Salim, a farmer from Es Samakiya, reported on the villagers' reaction:

> We were terrified and could not understand what was happening. We saw the smoke but could not see anything else. Muhammad Ahmad Saʿid was shouting, trying to assure us that the "Health

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[44] Ahmad Yusif ʿAli, interviewed at Khan al-Shaikh Camp, Syria, April 28, 1973.

[45] Eyewitness Hassan Mahmud Abu Qutun, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, April 26, 1973.

> Department" might have decided to spray the village. Uneasiness prevailed among us all.[46]

Later that day, Zionist armoured cars were seen approaching Es Samakiya from the direction of Et Tabigha. By then it had become clear that Jewish soldiers had burnt the village of Et Tabigha. The villagers suddenly panicked and began to flee east towards Syria. Mustafa Qrayam, a farmer, described the flight:

> Although ʿAbada, the Jewish mukhtar at Genossar, who often visited Asʿad Saʿid, our mukhtar, had told us that the Jewish army was planning to control the Tiberias-Rosh Pinna road... and that we should surrender or leave to Syria, we did not think that it would be so soon... They did not give us time to gather our belongings. As we were leaving, Jewish soldiers fired over our heads... they could have killed us all. They surely were not short on ammunition.[47]

Few villagers made their way back to the village. One of them, Saʿid Salim Saʿid, reported:

> At the village, we met Father Taufiq near the convent of Kafr Nakhum. He was pleased to see us. He assured us that there were no soldiers in the village, adding that they were preparing to occupy Safad. He encouraged us to take as much food and personal belongings as we could with us, remarking that soon we might not be able to return. Only a week later, Jewish soldiers began patrolling the roads, and it became extremely difficult and dangerous to return to the village.[48]

Safad

The city of Safad, the undeclared capital of Galilee, had a population of 9,530 Arabs and 2,400 Jews and a total urban land area of 1,429 dunums.[49]

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[46] Salim Saʿid Salim, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, April 29, 1973.

[47] Eyewitness Mustafa Qrayam, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, on April 26, 1973.

[48] Saʿid Salim Saʿid, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, April 25, 1973.

[49] 998 dunums belonged to the Arabs, 153 dunums to the Jews, and 79 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 71.

The people of Safad had heard that the city of Tiberias had fallen into Zionist hands. They became extremely worried when they heard that the fortress at Rosh Pinna and the nearby army camp had been captured and that the villages of Ja'una and Ghuweir Abu Shusha had been cleared of their Arab inhabitants. Fayiz Qadurah, a member of the Safad militia, recalled:

> We continued to believe that Safad was safe. Upon the British evacuation on April 16, we occupied all the city's strategic positions: the Citadel, the Government House, and the police post on Mount Cana'an... We were the majority, and the feeling among us was that we would defeat the Jews with sticks and rocks... The fall of Ja'una and other villages along the Tiberias-Safad road worried us. Now we were besieged from the east and the south.[50]

Although 200 to 250 men of Safad were armed with various kinds of rifles and 35 to 50 rounds of ammunition each,[51] very few had any systematic military training;[52] they depended greatly on the Arab forces positioned in the city.[53] Nevertheless when the Zionists attacked 'Ein ez Zeitun, the Arab forces refused to join in the fighting and would not permit the militia to join the villagers in defending themselves, assuring everyone that Shishakli and his men would repulse an attack on the city, and that the task of the Arab forces in Safad and the militia was to defend the city. The people of Safad became discouraged and lost confidence in their forces. 'Issa 'Abid al-Khadrah, a merchant and a member of the Safad militia, recounted:

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[50] Eyewitness Fayiz Qadurah, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, April 10, 1973.

[51] *Ibid.*, April 10, 1973. Jadu'Iz al-Din, an officer with the ALA who served in Safad, estimated the strength of the militia as of May 1 at 300. "Suqut Madinat Safad" ("The Fall of the City of Safad") *Shu'un Filastiniya,* No. 21 (May 1973), p. 95.

[52] Only five of the armed men could use their weapons effectively, according to Usamah al-Naqib, a physician and, at the time, a member of the local militia, interviewed in Damascus, Syria, April 26, 1973.

[53] Arab forces in Safad as of May 9 were distributed as follows: within the city were two Transjordanian detachments led by Sari Fnaish (assisted by Imil Jmai'an) and 'Iz al-Din al-Tall; the local militia, led by Subhi al-Khadrah; and a detachment of volunteers, led by Hisham al-'Azam; surrounding Safad were an armoured squadron, led by Fayiz Qusri at Meirun, a detachment of six armoured cars (brought from Acre), led by Abdul-Hamid Saraj, and an Iraqi detachment, led by Jadu'Iz al-Din. Altogether, the forces were estimated at between 450 and 500 men. See 'Iz al-Din, "Suqut Madinat Safad," pp. 95-98; and al-Arif, *al-Nakba,* I, 301-06.

> We could not defend the city, nor did we count on the Arab forces to protect it. Rumours spread that the Jews had been given ʿEin ez Zeitun... The fall of this village left the city besieged from the south, east and north. We felt that the Arab forces did not try to prevent this situation... If Sari Fnaish and his men did not protect ʿEin ez Zeitun, what would make you think he would protect Safad... what interest would they have in defending Safad but not ʿEin ez Zeitun?[54]

The decisive battle for Safad began on the night of May 9-10. The Palmach opened heavy artillery fire on all positions occupied by Arab forces in the city. Their use of the homemade mortar, the Davidka, which produced a great deal of noise, left the people of Safad in a state of shock. Usamah al-Naqib, a member of the militia, reported:

> On the night of the attack, the responsible Arab commanders: Shishakli, Sari Fnaish,[55] Ihsan Kamlamaz (trainer of the local militia); were out of the city.[56] We did not have a unified command. Everyone fought on his own... We were unaware of what was happening in the other quarters of the city. Rumours spread that the ALA had begun to withdraw.... The people of Safad began to flee in panic. We could not find out what was happening.... It was raining hard. We knew we could not sustain the defence of our city alone and so by midnight decided to retreat. We heard that the city fell to the Jews by morning.[57]

The fall of Safad on May 10, 1948 was a great shock to the Palestinians in Galilee. The villagers of the Hula Valley were disheartened and terrified; a great number of the villagers in Eastern Galilee began to flee. Almost all of the villages surrounding the city of Safad were now evacuated.

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[54] ʿIssa ʿAbid al-Khadrah, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, April 28, 1973.

[55] There was great concern because Sari Fnaish, it was alleged, left Safad the night of May 9 on orders from King ʿAbdullah, who preferred to see Safad fall rather than let Haj Amin (who was believed to be on his way to Safad) form a Palestinian government in that city.

[56] It is believed that Arab forces planned to attack the Jewish quarter of Safad at 4:30 a.m., May 10, to end the Jewish offensive against Safad and relieve Jewish pressure on the city of Acre. See ʿIz al-Din, "Suqut Madinat Safad" pp. 98-103; and Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence,* p. 111.

[57] Eyewitness Usamah al-Naqib, interviewed in Damascus, Syria, April 30, 1973.

Edh Dhahiriya et Tahta

Edh Dhahiriya et Tahta is a village about two kilometers southwest of Safad. It had a population of 350 Arabs and a total land area of 6,773 dunums.[58]

On May 1, soon after the Jewish attack on ʿEin ez Zeitun, a few of the villagers began to take their families to safety at ʿEin al-Wuhush, an area about half an hour's walk south of the village. A few days later, the villagers were visited by members of the ALA who stayed at Qassim Tarawiya's house. Mirʿi Hassan Salamah, a farmer and a member of the village militia, recalled:

> We expected to join the ALA and attack the Jewish quarter of Safad. We decided it would be safer to have our old men, women and children out of the village. Our armed men, estimated at between 20 and 30, with different kinds of rifles and about 30 to 40 rounds of ammunition each, remained in the village. A few days later, when nothing happened and the ALA decided to leave, we brought our families back to the village.[59]

On different occasions, Zionist infantrymen with mules (there was no paved road leading to the village) approached the village but were repulsed; they mined the lane as they retreated.[60] Ismaʿil Salim Zaid, mukhtar of the village, went to Safad several times to ask the ALA for arms and ammunition, but without success. Sari Fnaish suggested that the villagers go to the Mufti. Muhammad Salameh said: "King ʿAbdullah and the Mufti were rivals... that was how we lost Palestine to the Jews."[61]

Most of the people of Edh Dhahiriya et Tahta remained outside the village; the militia did not leave. They were told by Qassim Tarawiya, a fellow villager who worked in Safad for a Jew named Yosel Goldman, that great Jewish reinforcements had arrived and that they planned to

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[58] 6,771 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 2 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 69.

[59] Only seven men had had military training, having served with the British Police corps or the Transjordan Frontier Force. Mirʿi Hassan Salamah, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 14, 1973.

[60] I was told that Muhammad Salim al-Sarsur's mule was killed by a mine. Saʿid Asʿad al-Hudairi tried to uncover a mine but was killed. Muhammad Salamah, a labourer, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 14, 1973.

[61] *Ibid.*, March 14, 1973.

capture Safad and the villages around it. Mirʿi Hassan Salamah reported:

> We began to patrol the village at all times. The Jews attacked Safad almost every night. We remained at our positions... the Jews did not approach our village. On the morning of May 10, an ALA volunteer from the village of ʿAsira passed through our village and told us that Safad had fallen to the Jews... Upon our mukhtar's suggestion, we retreated to join our families at ʿEin al-Wuhush.... Some of us departed south to the village of Farradiya and others went east to the village of Es Sammuʿi.[62]

A few people were able to infiltrate back to their village to bring out some of their belongings. Muhammad Salamah was one of them. He recalled:

> Shukri Amin Zaid, Taha Muhammad Qassim Tarawiya, and Ahmad Ibrahim Tarawiya could not make it back... they were blown up by Jewish mines. I returned to my family and decided to leave to Lebanon. We stayed there a month and a half, then decided to return to Galilee. My father, brother, wife and children stayed with me on the outskirts of the village of Farradiya, southwest of our village. My mother, sister, cousin and nephew remained at Safsaf. We stayed there until the Jews bombed the village of ʿEilabun [during the Jewish offensive in October 1948, which resulted in the occupation of all Galilee], forcing its people to flee north. Together we crossed the village of Beit Jann, ʿEin el Asad, and Ghabbatiya... there we learned that the Jews had also bombed Safsaf. My mother, sister and other relatives were among those killed there.... We continued to Saʿsaʿ and on to Bint Jubail.[63]

ʿAkbara

The village of ʿAkbara, about three kilometers south of Safad, was another example of the eviction of villagers by Zionist military action. ʿAkbara had a total population of 390 Arabs and a total land area of 3,224 dunums.[64]

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[62] Mirʿi Hassan Salamah, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon March 14, 1973.

[63] Muhammad Salamah, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 14, 1973.

[64] 3,167 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 57 dunums were listed as "public property."

The people of ʿAkbara did not have a radio in the village; they got news of the war from those who travelled back and forth to Safad and who often brought back a newspaper. News of Zionist atrocities against Arab villagers, including the massacre of Deir Yasin, reached them gradually. Mustafa Ahmad Maʿari, the son of the village's mukhtar, recalled:

> We heard about the massacre of Deir Yasin. Arab radios and newspapers said a great deal. It encouraged us to arm ourselves, but it also scared us.... When the village of ʿEin ez Zeitun was captured, for example, many of the villagers began to flee, taking their old men, women and children out of the village to the neighbouring villages of Farradiya and Es Sammuʿi. We could not stop them from leaving... they were trying to protect their families.... if they did not do that... what could they be expected to do?[65]

The villagers of ʿAkbara, like most Arab villagers in Palestine, were poorly armed. The village's strength was estimated at between 15 and 20 men armed with different kinds of rifles and between 20 to 30 rounds of ammunition for each man. None of the villagers had any military training, nor were they at all prepared for a Zionist offensive.[66]

On May 1, soon after the occupation of ʿEin ez Zeitun by the Zionists, a "British" officer with his men came to the village and asked to meet with the mukhtar. Mustafa Ahmad Maʿari reported:

> The man, claiming to be a British officer, visited with my father and asked about the strength of the village. We were suspicious.... We did not believe they were representing the British government.... We were sure they were Jews and gave them an exaggerated estimate of the strength of our village. They left the village assuring us that no harm would come to us.... It was then that the remaining villagers fled, leaving behind the armed men stationed at al-Lubani, an area about two kilometers west of the village.[67]

The Zionist attack on ʿAkbara came at dawn, a day after the fall of Safad. A Zionist force, shooting flares into the air, approached the village from the east. At the outskirts of the village, they divided into two

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[65] Eyewitness Mustafa Ahmad Maʿari, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 13, 1973.

[66] Eyewitness Mahmud Rashid, a farmer and a member of the village militia, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 13, 1976.

[67] Mustafa Ahmad Maʿari, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 13, 1973.

units, one continuing straight on and the other moving towards the village from the southeast. Mahmud Rashid reported:

> We tried to stop the Jewish advance from the east. We had the upper hand because of our positions, overlooking the valley on the way to the village. Soon after, we encountered another attack from the southeast. We could not sustain both fronts and decided to retreat northwest. The Jews did not stay long in the village. They destroyed a few houses and part of the village mosque, departing with our livestock.[68]

Almost all of the villagers stayed at the villages of Farradiya and Es Sammuʿi until all of Galilee fell to the Zionists. Many villagers infiltrated back to their village and brought out food and some of their personal belongings. Mustafa Ahmad Maʿari and Mahmud Rashid told me that ʿAbdu Nimir ʿAbdu, Yusif Shaikha and Muhammad Ahmad Maʿari returned to the village and were caught by members of the tribe of ʿArab al-Haib, who were collaborating with the Zionists. They were taken to Rosh Pinna, but ʿAbdu Nimir ʿAbdu and Muhammad Ahmad Maʿari escaped and returned to Farradiya the following day. They told the villagers that, on the way, they pretended that they needed to urinate and fled into the woods. As for the third man, Yusif Shaikha, he was imprisoned by the Zionists for six months: he later joined his family in Syria.

Few of the villagers were able to take any personal belongings with them. Most of the villagers expected to return to the village, even though they knew that all of Galilee had fallen. Mustafa Ahmad Maʿari recalled:

> We were sure that we would return.... On our way to Lebanon, we stopped at Beit Jann and stayed with Naif Abu Khaiya, a Druze friend of my family. We left the few things we had carried with us with him until we would return.... At the village of Hurfeish, we were stopped by the Jews; they searched us and decided to detain me. My mother started to cry, saying if they kept me, they would have to keep us all. They let me go. We have not to this day returned to our home; our personal belongings [left in 1948] with my father's friend, Naif Abu Khaiya are still there.[69]

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[68] Mahmud Rashid, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 13, 1973.

[69] Mustafa Ahmad Maʿari, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 13, 1973.

El Khalisa

The village of El Khalisa was also immediately affected by the fall of Safad. The village is about 28 kilometers north of Safad, on the main Safad-Metulla road. It had a population of 1,840 Arabs and a total land area of 11,280 dunums.[70] The villagers of El Khalisa did not have a radio and heard news of the fighting only by word of mouth. In early February they learned of the attack on the village of Saʿsaʿ. Saʿid al-ʿAbdullah, a former policeman with the Palestine Police Force and a member of the village militia, remembered:

> We were not fearful of the Jews, but we were dismayed by their attacks on civilians. We decided to revenge our brothers killed at Saʿsaʿ and attacked the Jewish convoys travelling north.... But their convoys were so well protected that our bullets could not stop them.[71]

The villagers were not prepared to withstand a Zionist attack. Their strength was between 35 and 40 men,[72] armed with different kinds of rifles, and with 50 to 70 rounds of ammunition for each man.[73]

About a week or ten days prior to the Zionist attack on Safad, the Zionists distributed leaflets suggesting Arab-Jewish cooperation, asking the villagers to remain in their homes. Muhammad Shahadah Hamid, a farmer, reported:

> We read the leaflets but were not convinced... they did not want peace with us... they were fooling us. They used to distribute leaflets of peaceful words and simultaneously attack us from the settlement of El Manara, to the west. We did not trust them.[74]

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[70] 10,773 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 507 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 70.

[71] Saʿid al-ʿAbdullah, interviewed at Tall al-Zaʿtar Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 17, 1973.

[72] Nine trained men were named by Ahmad Hussain al-ʿAli, a farmer and a member of the village militia, interviewed at Tall al-Zaʿtar Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 16, 1973.

[73] ʿAbdullah al-ʿIssa, interviewed at Tall al-Zaʿtar Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 16 and 17, 1973.

[74] Muhammad Shahadah Hamid, interviewed at Tall al-Zʿatar Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 16, 1973.

Upon the fall of Safad, the villagers fled from their homes to the village of Hunin, to the northwest. About 100 men remained in the village. ᶜAbdullah al-Issa, a farmer and a member of the village militia who remained in El Khalisa, recounted:

> The morning Safad fell, we met members of the ALA retreating towards the mountains. They suggested that we take our families across to Lebanon for a week or so.... They assured us that they were reorganizing to recapture Safad.... They did say that the Arab countries were planning to send their planes to bomb Jewish positions. We believed them but decided to take our families only to the village of Hunin, bordering Lebanon, while the militia remained in the village.... Within a few days, the Jews of El Manara shelled the village, as a Jewish armoured unit was approaching the village on the main Safad-Metulla road. We could not withstand the attack and began to retreat through the mountains to Hunin.... We were unable to take anything with us because the main road was controlled by the Jews and we could not carry our personal belongings through the mountains.[75]

Only a few villagers infiltrated back to the village to get some of their belongings. Saᶜid al-ᶜAbdullah and Ahmad Hussain al-ᶜAli were among them. Saᶜid al-ᶜAbdullah reported:

> I took my family to Lebanon, but there was nothing for us to do there. I decided to return to the village to dig up some of the money I had hidden in the courtyard... I had to return even though I knew it might cost me my life.[76]

Ahmad Hussain al-ᶜAli recounted:

> I left the village without harvesting my grain.... I returned to collect some of our tobacco and grain to keep my family from starving in Lebanon. At the village, we found that the Jews had burned and destroyed the houses belonging to ᶜAli Zakayan, Abu ᶜAli Muhammad Hamadih, Mustafa al-Haj Yusif, ᶜIssa Muhammad, ᶜAli Salih Ahmad, Muhammad ᶜArab al-Haj Mahmud, Salih Ismaᶜil, Sari al-Khadir, Dawud Hussain,

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[75] ᶜAbdullah al-ᶜIssa, interviewed at Tall al-Zaᶜtar Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 17, 1973.

[76] Saᶜid al-ᶜAbdullah, interviewed at Tall al-Zaᶜatar Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 17, 1973.

> ᶜAbdul-Raziq Hamid, Qassim Muhammad al-Salih and ᶜAli Hussain Mahmud.... The village was in ruins.[77]

Beisan

Upon the completion of Operation Yiftah and Operation Matateh, a mopping up operation (Gideon) was conducted by the Golani Brigade in the Beisan Valley. As early as May 2, Golani forces began to besiege the city of Beisan[78] in preparation for its capture. The people of Beisan were worried. The fall of Tiberias and the flight of its people came to mind, and many people began to prepare to take their families to the Jordan Valley, the only route out. Muhammad Ahmad Shuraidi, a fisherman and a member of the city's militia, reported:

> We were worried about the siege of the city but somehow hopeful because we were so close to the Arab armies stationed in Transjordan. The financially well-to-do among us — like ᶜAli Abu Rabah, the Shakhshirs, the Jamus — began to flee with their families. They were active and had contributed money to buy arms.... We understood their anxiety and their wanting to leave.[79]

The poorer people however, stayed in the city, even though the city was not prepared to withstand a Jewish offensive. The city's strength was estimated at between 160 and 175 men (including 60 to 75 men belonging to the ALA), armed with 150 to 170 rifles of different makes, 3 machine guns, 200 hand grenades, and 100 to 150 rounds of ammunition for each man.[80]

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[77] Ahmad Hussain al-ᶜAli, interviewed at Tall al-Zaᶜtar Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 16, 1973.

[78] Beisan had a total population of 5,180 Arabs and a total urban land area of 663 dunums, 561 dunums belonging to Arabs and 1 dunum to the Jews, and 101 dunums listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 43.

[79] Muhammad Ahmad Shuraidi, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, July 18, 1973.

[80] These estimates were given to me by Mamun ᶜAbdul-Rahman Darwish Ahmad, a housepainter and a member of the city's militia, interviewed in Damascus, Syria, July 16, 1973. These data are supported by al-ᶜArif, *al-Nakba,* I 312; and Qawuqji, No. 34/AC, March 21, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

During the night of May 11, the Golani Brigade shelled the city. Marsila Abu Khalil recalled:

> At about midnight, we were awakened by shells exploding all over the city. My husband and a few other men left to aid the fighters.... it was not long, however, before they returned. They told us that the Jews had captured Tall al-Hussun and had surrounded the city.... They said we had better join the others and leave for the Jordan Valley.[81]

The occupation of Tall al-Hussun by the Golani troops greatly affected the people's morale, because the hill, overlooking the city from the north, was of decisive strategic importance. Mamun ʿAbdul-Rahman Darwish Ahmad reported:

> We did not expect to hold on to Tall al-Hussun by ourselves for long since there were only about 10 to 15 men guarding it.... However, we did expect the Arab armies stationed in Transjordan to join the fighting to prevent its occupation, which would mean the fall of the city.... Soon after the Jews occupied Tall al-Hussun, they telephoned the police post west of the city, suggesting that the city surrender. They gave us ten hours to surrender, offering safe passage to those who wished to leave.[82]

ʿIssam Tahtamuni and his family departed during the truce which was now put into effect.

> Two of the men working for us came to the house at dawn and suggested that we leave the city while there was still a chance. We loaded two of our donkeys with a few of our personal belongings and left for the Jordan Valley. The road was full of panicked people, anxious to cross the river to Transjordan. My father joined us the next morning, while my uncle and aunt remained in the city for almost a month... until the Jews ordered all the Arabs to leave, carrying them in trucks to the river and forcing them to cross to Transjordan.[83] They told us that at noon the next day [May 12], Father Yuhanna al-Nimri and Rashid Darwish Ahmad, the city's mayor, surrendered the city. They were driven around the city to aid the Jews in the surrender of arms.[84]

Few people were able to infiltrate into the city, Muhammad Ahmad Shuraidi reported:

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[81] Marsila Abu Khalil, interviewed in Damascus, Syria, July 18, 1973.

[82] Mamun ʿAbdul-Rahman Darwish Ahmad, interviewed in Damascus, Syria, July 16, 1973.

[83] Talmi gives an account of this expulsion in *Lexicon Melhemit Ha-Itzmaout*, p. 38.

[84] ʿIssa Tahtamuni, a tailor, interviewed at Dirʿa, Syria, July 19, 1973.

> I returned about ten days after the city was captured to bring out some of our personal belongings. The Jews were stationed in all the strategic positions: the police post to the west, Dr. Rashid Darwish Ahmad's house in the south, and Tall al-Hussun in the north.... The Arabs in the city were afraid. I stayed in the city for two days and escaped at night during the curfew.[85]

Kafr Misr

Kafr Misr is the northern village in the Beisan Subdistrict, halfway between Nazareth and Samakh. It had a population of 330 Arabs and a total land area of 13,230 dunums.[86]

The village was inhabited by the al-Zuʿbi family, led by Hassan al-Zuʿbi, mukhtar of the village, who collaborated with the Zionists; outside the village to the south resided members of the ʿArab al-Sabarjih tribe,[87] who were friends of the Fahum family of Nazareth, an ally of the Mufti's and an old enemy of the al-Zuʿbis. The Sabarjih tribe was not ready for a direct confrontation with the al-Zuʿbi family.[88] Furthermore, Mukhtar Hassan al-Zuʿbi maintained good relations with ʿAudih Ziyab, Mukhtar of the ʿArab al-Sabarjih, and visited the tribe on different occasions. Ibrahim Hamad Qatish, a farmer in the tribe, described the situation:

> We did not like the al-Zuʿbi family's collaboration with the Zionists who were killing our brothers and occupying their land, but we couldn't keep them from doing so.... The al-Zuʿbi family and the Jews always had an understanding between themselves and had mutual interests. They sold land to the Jews.... The al-Zuʿbis, after all, did not compel us to break our good relations with the Fahum family.[89]

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[85] Muhammad Ahmad Shuraidi, interviewed at Yarmuk Camp, Damascus, Syria, July 18, 1973.

[86] 4,629 dunums belonged to the Arabs, 4,462 dunums to the Jews and 4,139 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 43.

[87] Ibrahim ʿAwad, a member of the tribe, interviewed in Dummar, Syria, July 15, 1973.

[88] I was told that the population of the tribe consisted of 40 to 50 families. The strength of the tribe was estimated at between 25 and 30 rifles, supplied by the Fahums. ʿAwad Muhammad Hussain, a farmer and a member of the tribe, interviewed in Dummar, Syria, July 16, 1973.

[89] Ibrahim Hamad Qatish, interviewed in Dummar, Syria, July 16, 1973.

The fall of Beisan, followed by the surrender of Et Taiyiba, El Bira, Tamra, Sulam, Naᶜura, Nein and Kafr Misr proper, had isolated the tribe from the rest of the Arabs in the Beisan-Tiberias area. The tribe became increasingly insecure, and one night a few Jewish soldiers infiltrated into the tribe's land and killed Salih al-Shuᶜaimat. Soon after, Mukhtar Hassan al-Zuᶜbi visited the tribe and advised them to leave to Nazareth, an Arab city still in Arab hands. ᶜAwad Muhammad Hussein and his wife reported:

> Mukhtar Hassan al-Zuᶜbi advised us to leave to Nazareth to prevent further killings. He reminded us that we were not well armed and that almost all of the Arab villages in the immediate vicinity had either been captured or had surrendered to the Jews.... We accepted his advice and left for Nazareth. We stayed there until it fell and went north to Lebanon and then to Syria. Our tribe has since been divided, some in Jordan and the rest in Dummar.... We are still waiting to return home.[90]

Haifa

The occupation of Haifa was completed on April 22, 1948.[91] Zionist convoys going to the settlements in the north were safeguarded by the British who were stationed at Napoleon Hill, east of Acre, and at the St. James police post to the north. The Haganah High Command feared that upon the evacuation of the British from their military bases, their settlements in Western Galilee would be besieged after the entry of the Arab armies. The situation demanded immediate action, and on the eve of May 14, Operation Ben Ami was initiated.[92] The objective of the operation was: to reach the settlements of Nahariyah and Yechiam (Kh. Jiddin); to carry supplies and ammunition from the city of Haifa

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[90] Eyewitnesses ᶜAwad Muhammad Hussain and his wife, Umm Muhammad ᶜAwad Hussain, interviewed in Dummar, Syria, July 16, 1973.

[91] See Major Roland D. Wilson, *Cordon and Search: With the 6th Airborne Division in Palestine* (Aldershot, England: Gale and Polden Limited, 1949), pp. 191-94. Also Walid Khalidi, *Why Did the Palestinians Leave?* (Cairo: The General Union of Palestine Students, 1965), pp. 21-56.

[92] The operation was carried out entirely in an area allotted to the Arab state under the partition plan. Ben Ami ("Son of My People") was named after the fallen commander of the Yechiam (Kh. Jiddin) convoy who died in the battle of Kabri on March 28, 1948. Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 113.

to the northernmost settlement of Hanita, to disrupt the transport routes leading into Western Galilee, thus preventing a Lebanese invasion from the north; and to evacuate the women and children from the settlements bordering Arab villages.[93]

During the night of May 13, a supply convoy accompanied by Haganah forces left Haifa overland with the mission of occupying Napoleon Hill. Simultaneously, another unit with trucks set out from the settlement of ʿEin Ham Mifrats, south of Acre, in the direction of the Nahariya intersection of the roads to Acre and Safad. It was to bypass Napoleon Hill (which by this time was supposed to have been occupied by Zionist forces) and the city of Acre and proceed north towards the Arab village of Es Sumeiriya. A third seaborne force left the post of Haifa towards the settlements of Shave Zion and Nahariya, north of Acre. This force was also to bypass Acre and capture the villages of Es Sumeiriya and Ez Zib, securing the road for the forthcoming convoy travelling north. But when this unit reached Es Sumeiriya, its men were too seasick to fight. Consequently, as the convoy from ʿEin Ham Mifrats approached the village, it was surprised to discover that the village was still in the hands of its Arab inhabitants.[94]

Es Sumeiriya

Es Sumeiriya is a village about six kilometers north of the city of Acre on the main road between Acre and the Lebanese border. It had a population of 760 Arabs and a total land area of 8,542 dunums.[95]

The people of Es Sumeiriya heard on the radio belonging to Mahmud Amin, mukhtar of the village, of the Zionist attack on the village of Deir Yasin. They were further terrified to hear of the fall of Tiberias, Haifa and Safad, but were somewhat heartened by the news of the Arab states' intended intervention in Palestine.

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[93] Talmi, *Lexicon Melhemit Ha-Itzmaout*, p. 40.

[94] *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42. Also see Israel Army, *Toldot Melhemit Ha-Komaniyout*, pp. 140-42; and Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, pp. 113-14.

[95] 7,935 dunums belonged to the Arab villagers and 607 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 41.

During the day of May 13, Yusif Nafaʿa, believed to be an officer in the Arab Liberation Army stationed at Acre, visited the village[96] and assured the villagers of military aid in case of a Zionist attack. At dawn the next day, a Jewish force approached the village from the northwest. The few families remaining in the village began to flee to the neighbouring villages of ʿAmqa, El Ghabisiya and Kafr Yasif and to the town of Acre; only about 35 armed men remained in the village to try to repel the Zionists. At sunrise, the villagers saw an armoured unit approaching from the south, along the road from Acre. Believing it to be the Arab force coming to their rescue (the men wore red and white Arab headdresses), Salih Saʿid Kaʿbush, positioned south of the village, began to fire into the air as a welcome to the unit. But when he was fired upon and instantly killed, the villagers realized that the armoured unit was the enemy's and began to flee. Ahmad Ibrahim Yusif, a farmer and a member of the village's group of armed men, related what had happened:

> It was impossible to withstand the Jewish attack on two fronts. We were very few and very poorly armed. We attempted to repel the attack from the northwest, but we never expected this armoured unit to approach our village on the main road from Acre, since we assumed that Acre was still in Arab hands.... We retreated, leaving behind many killed and injured.[97]

The people of Es Sumeiriya had counted on the Arab Liberation Army to come to their rescue; when it did not, they were severely demoralized. Hussain Khalil ʿAwad had taken his family to Acre "because I thought they would be safe there, where the Arab Liberation Army was stationed."

After the fall of the village, he went back to Acre and took his family to the neighbouring village of El Ghabisiya. From that time on, he lost confidence in the Arab forces and their ability to protect the

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[96] Many of the villagers had already moved their families out of the village as early as April 10, 1948. A few armed men remained in the village to protect it, while others came in and out. Hussain Khalil ʿAwad, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 28, 1973.

[97] I was given the names of 11 men, women and children killed and four persons wounded by Ahmad Ibrahim Yusif, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 28, 1973.

city. He stayed in El Ghabisiya until it too fell, then fled again with his family to the village of ʿAmqa. He decided to return to El Ghabisiya to bring a few of his belongings which were left behind.

> I had to return to the village.... I had kept the keys of my rented house when I fled. At the village, I met a few elderly people who told me that the Jews were not near the house.... I went to the house and was glad to bring my belongings from there.[98]

He then took his family to the village of Abu Sinan, remaining there until it surrendered. With a few villagers, he marched northeastward, to the village of Tarshiha, where he stayed until it was captured. Now the whole of Galilee had fallen into Israeli hands. With his family he left for Lebanon, never to return to his village.

Some villagers returned to Es Sumeiriya. Ahmad Ibrahim Yusif was one of them.

> We returned to the village to get our dead. We were able to bring out the body of Mahmud Khalil ʿAwad because it was in the southernmost section of the village. The rest of the bodies remained in the center of the village because we could not get them out.[99]

Ibrahim Taher Saʿayah returned to the village with Ahmad Sabʿa, a farmer, three days after the village was captured.

> Few people were in the village. Most of the village was destroyed. The Jews had entrenched themselves in the south and east close to the Acre-Beirut road.... We went in and out of the village without being seen.[100]

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[98] Hussain Khalil ʿAwad, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 28, 1973.

[99] A day after the village had fallen into Zionist control, he returned with Hussain Khalil ʿAwad, ʿAli ʿAbbas, Yusif Saʿid Yusif, and Muhammad Saʿid ʿAmir. Ahmad Ibrahim Yusif, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 28, 1973.

[100] Those who remained in the village were Zainab al-Zainih, her husband, and their three children. Her oldest son left the village with the rest of the villagers. The family is still separated. Ibrahim Tahir Saʿayah, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1, 1973.

Ez Zib

Upon the occupation of Es Sumeiriya, the Carmeli Brigade proceeded north towards the village of Ez Zib, which is about 14 kilometers north of Acre, and had a population of 1,910 Arabs and a total land area of 12,607 dunums.[101]

The people of Ez Zib were too close to Jewish settlements to avoid clashes. After the battle of the Yechiam convoy at Kabri,[102] the Jews of Nahariya took revenge by attacking an Arab truck loaded with grain on its way from the village of Ez Zib to the city of Acre, killing the driver and three of the six passengers and wounding two others.[103] Henceforth, the villagers patrolled the road and tried to prevent Zionist convoys from reaching the settlements of Maʿsub and Hanita. But the villagers were not prepared to withstand a full-scale attack.[104] The village's strength in fighting men was estimated at between 70 and 75 men,[105] armed with some 60 different kinds of rifles, three or four Bren guns, and one machine gun, with 50 to 70 rounds of ammunition for each man. Here, as elsewhere, the villagers had to buy most of their own guns and ammunition. The cost of a rifle was between 100 and 120 Palestinian pounds ($400-480), while a single bullet cost ten piasters ($ 0.40). Many of the villagers sold part of their

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[101] 12,438 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 169 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 41.

[102] On March 28, 1948, Arab villagers ambushed a Zionist convoy near Kabri on its way from Nahariya to Yechiam (Kh. Jiddin). The villagers killed most of its passengers in a battle which lasted for over ten hours, and captured the armoured cars. This was one of the few setbacks the Zionists suffered in Western Galilee. For further information on the battle, see Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence,* pp. 67-70.

[103] It was the custom for the owners of the goods being transported to accompany their goods on the truck, riding on top of the sacks. Only one person, Muhammad Yamani, fled the scene without injury. Muhammad Asʿad Qiblawi, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1, 1973.

[104] Many of the villagers took their families to Ras en Naqura, just within the borders of Lebanon, soon after they heard of the massacre at Deir Yasin and Nasr-ed-Din. At the time of the Jewish attack, almost all of the villagers had left Ez Zib except for the armed and a few elderly people. I was given the names of six persons who stayed on. Ahmad Bakri al-Barjawi, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 2, 1973.

[105] Few of the armed men in the village had any military training except for six villagers who had served in the British Police Corps of the Transjordanian Frontier Force. *Ibid.,* March 3, 1973.

livestock, land, or their wives' jewelry to purchase a gun and some ammunition.[106]

At dawn on May 14, a company of the Carmeli Brigade attacked Ez Zib and occupied the house of Muhammad ʿAli al-Shaikh Taha, in the southernmost section of the village.[107] Soon after, a Zionist armoured unit approached the village from the south; the soldiers wore red and white Arab headdresses.

> We knew that our Arab brothers would not let us down. But when the approaching soldiers began to shoot at us, we realized that they were Jews... They had fooled us with their headdresses... Our Arab brothers did not come to our rescue. Only 35 or 40 men remained to defend the village. We could not sustain the Jewish attack. The armoured cars really terrified us. We began to retreat north, leaving behind our dead and injured.[108]

A few of the villagers who were "too old and could not escape, remained in the village." Muhammad Asʿad Qiblawi recounted:

> I returned to the village about a month after it had fallen into Jewish hands, to bring a few things from my home. I talked to the elderly people who had remained; they were all staying at Abu Salih's house. They said that the Jewish soldiers had destroyed most of the al-Ramil area, south of the village, and the eastern section... and that a few of them were still in the village and were stationed at al-Saʿdi's house, on the Acre-Beirut road.[109]

My informants commented that a few people had recently (*ca.* 1972) gone to Western Galilee via the West Bank to see their village and discovered that it had "disappeared."[110] The few who had stayed

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[106] The Bren guns were bought by one of the rich inhabitants of the village, Abu Fayiz ʿAtayah. The machine gun was owned by Fathallah al-Shaikh Taha. Muhammad ʿAbid, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1, 1973.

[107] Eyewitnesses Muhammad Asʿad Qiblawi, Ahmad Bakri al-Barjawi and Muhammad ʿAbid told me that Muhammad ʿAli al-Shaikh Taha was bayoneted to death and his wife fled through a window, breaking a leg in the process. ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1 and 2, 1973.

[108] Muhammad Asʿad Qiblawi, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 2, 1973.

[109] Accompanying him were Sulaiman Abu ʿAwad, and Muhammad Yamani. *Ibid.*, March 1, 1973.

[110] Ez Zib, like many other Arab villages, was pulled down and converted into a kibbutz (Gesher Hazaf, now inhabited by American, British and South African Jewish immigrants). See Anis Sayigh, ed., *Buldaniyat Filastin al-Muhtallah* (Towns of Occupied Palestine) (Beirut: Palestine Liberation Organization Research Center, 1968), p. 127.

behind had been moved to the village of El Mazraᶜa, just south of the Jewish town of Nahariya.

El Bassa

El Bassa is about 18 kilometers north of Acre. Its population was estimated on December 31, 1944 at 2,950 Arabs,[111] and 150 Jews residing in nearby Ma'sub[112].

The people of El Bassa had been assured by their Jewish neighbours at Maᶜsub and Hanita that they would cause them no harm. The Jews were in the habit of visiting the village often and knew that its people harboured no ill will towards them.

The villagers first heard of Jewish atrocities committed in Arab villages over the radio at Ahmad Hussain Mughribi's coffeehouse. After the fall of Tiberias, Haifa and Safad, they no longer felt secure. Hussain Asᶜad Khalil, a farmer and one of the village's armed men, reported that "they no longer trusted the Jews because the latter now had a plan to convert Palestine into a Jewish state.... They wanted our land as well and did not want us there."[113]

When the attack on El Bassa came, the women and children had been evacuated to Lebanon. Hussain Asᶜad Khalil reported:

> I took my mother, wife and children to Lebanon when the Jews of Nahariya killed my father, who was a policeman with the British, on his way to Acre. I did not want any harm done to the rest of my family. At the village remained about 40 armed men and a few elderly people.[114]

At dawn on May 14, as the men started to relax after being on guard all night, a Zionist attack was launched against the village. At

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[111] About two-thirds of the villagers were Christians and one-third Muslims. The Christians resided in the eastern section of the village and had two mukhtars, Wadiᶜ ᶜAzzam and Jabbur al-Harug. The Muslims lived in the western part of the village and had Khadir ᶜIssa as their mukhtar. Hussain Asᶜad Khalil, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1, 1973.

[112] El Bassa had a total land area of 29,535 dunums, 25,258 dunums belonging to the Arabs, 4,178 to the Jews and 99 dunums listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 40.

[113] Hussain Asᶜad Khalil, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1, 1973.

[114] Only three of these could use their weapons effectively. *Ibid.,* March 2, 1973.

first the villagers were able to halt the attack, but only until an enemy armoured unit appeared in the west. As they believed that the coastal villages were still in Arab hands, an attack from this direction was unexpected. According to ʿAbdullah Hussain Dukhi, who took part in the fighting:

> At first we thought the armoured unit was Jordanian (the Arab Legion) because the men wore red and white headdresses. When they began shelling our positions, we knew they were not Arabs.... We felt helpless and decided to retreat north, the only way open to us.[115]

As in most cases of villages in Western Galilee, a few people from El Bassa were able to infiltrate back to their village to bring out their belongings. Mahmud Hassan Dukhi returned two days after the village had fallen to bring back his mother, who had insisted on staying, only to find her burnt body at his home. Hussain Asʿad Khalil, who also returned, reported:

> My uncle and his wife were not in the village. The village was empty.... I saw the bodies of ʿAbdullah Ismaʿil Muhammad, Ahmad Muhammad Khalil and ʿAli Hussain ʿAli, who had been killed by Jewish soldiers as they tried to infiltrate into the village.... The Jews were entrenched at Jubail, overlooking El Bassa, from the southeast.[116]

Hussain Asʿad Khalil's uncle and his wife, who stayed on after the fall of El Bassa, and then spent ten years in El Mazraʿa before joining their family in Lebanon, described the Jewish occupation of the village:

> The day the village fell, Jewish soldiers ordered all those who remained in the village to gather in the church. Simultaneously, they took a few young people — including Salim Darwish and his sister, ʿIllin — outside the church and shot them dead. Soon after, they ordered us to bury them. During the following day, we were transferred to El Mazraʿa.... There we met other elderly people gathered from the surrounding villages.[117]

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[115] ʿAbdullah Hussain Dukhi, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1, 1973.

[116] Hussain Asʿad Khalil, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 1, 1973.

[117] The names of five people killed in the process of occupation were given to me by Hussain Asʿad Khalil's uncle and his wife (I was asked not to print their names), interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 4, 1973.

In order to complete the evacuation and depopulation of the remainder of Western Galilee, and to forestall possible counter-attacks from Lebanon, on May 24, the Carmeli Brigade attacked and seized the frontier post of Ras en Naqura. Kabri and El Ghabisiya fell to the Israeli forces.

Kabri

The people of Kabri[118] were disheartened when they heard that all the Arab villages along the coast, including the city of Acre (May 17),[119] had fallen into Zionist hands. They were very poorly armed; there were between 40 and 50 men sharing between them some 40 to 45 rifles of different kinds, with 70 to 100 rounds of ammunition each, and a few hand grenades.

The Jews had attacked Kabri earlier in the year (on February 1, 1948) when a small Zionist force attempted to blow up the house of Faris Sirhan, a leading notable and a follower of the Mufti of Jerusalem. In the following weeks the people of Kabri often blocked the main highway leading to Kh. Jiddin and to the other settlements in the north.

On the morning of March 28, Ibrahim Yaʿqub saw a Jewish armoured car leaving Kh. Jiddin to the main Nahariya-Safad road; the villagers had learned earlier that a convoy was on its way from Nahariya. They asked officer ʿAlush, in charge of the Arab Liberation Army group stationed at Kabri, to have 35 or 40 men assist them in preventing the passage of the convoy through Kabri on its way to Kh. Jiddin, but ʿAlush refused to cooperate, claiming that he had no orders to attack.

Determined nonetheless to block the road, the villagers gathered together in the al-Rayas area, two kilometers southwest of Kabri. Placing rocks in the road, one group took up positions on both sides;

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[118] The population and land ownership of Kabri were combined with the village of Tarshiha. The estimated population was put at 5,360 Arabs owning 37,309 dunums. Jews owned 90 dunums and 10,030 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 41.

[119] For further information, see Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill,* p. 129.

another group entrenched itself at the cemetery behind the stone tombs, overlooking the road.

At noon, the Zionists brought a bulldozer to al-Rayas to clear the way. Soon after, a convoy composed of three armoured cars, two trucks and a bus approached the village. The people of Kabri, joined by many others from the surrounding villages, opened fire but were unable to stop the convoy. An eyewitness, ʿAli Qadurah, remembers that at about this time a hand grenade was thrown at the lead armoured car, but it failed to explode. Then:

> A second hand grenade was thrown, but it fell short.... We did not hit any of the armoured cars. But suddenly as one of the armoured cars was turning around, it turned over and caught fire, blocking the road and the ʿAssal Water Canal, the water source of our village.[120]

The convoy was immobilized, it could not go forward and could not turn back because the vehicles were too close to each other. As the villagers continued shooting, the Jewish soldiers began to jump out of their armoured cars and run towards the village orchards. The villagers began to run out of ammunition. They urged those back in the village to send their women to the nearby unit of the Arab Liberation Army to shame them into joining the fight. By mid-afternoon, men of the Arab Liberation Army and other volunteers (villagers) from the neighbouring villages joined the fighting. Jamil Yaʿqub, a local villager who took part in the fighting, reported:

> We kept fighting until we killed almost all of them... Two injured Jewish soldiers, hiding in the fields, killed Ahmad Muhammad Hassan, the camel driver, as he was coming back to Kabri from the village of Kafr Yasif.... We destroyed all of their armoured cars and trucks except the bus. Officer Kallas, of the Arab Liberation Army, asked those in the bus to surrender, but they refused; they shot at him and he was wounded. We brought gasoline and set the bus on fire, with the soldiers in it.... It was God's will that we should win that day.[121]

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[120] ʿAli Qadurah, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 22, 1973.

[121] Jamil Yaʿqub, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 28, 1973.

At nightfall, a British force, accompanied by an Arab policeman, approached the village and was stopped at the roadblock. They demanded passage to al-Rayas but were not permitted to pass. Soon after, they retreated a few kilometers and began to shell the area from El Mazraᶜa. The next morning, the British soldiers came back and were handed the bodies of 74 Jewish soldiers.[122] My informants said that all the weapons captured on the battlefield were seized by the Arab Liberation Army.

A few days later, General Ismaᶜil Safwat, commander-in-chief of the Arab Liberation Army, visited the village and inspected the area, photographing the charred armoured cars. When he left, he took with him Mahmud Dib (the mukhtar's son), ᶜUthman Muhammad Qassim and Ahmad Rashid to headquarters in Damascus — who returned later with a gift to the village consisting of 11 rifles and some ammunition.

After this battle an attack on Kabri was expected, and it came on May 21, simultaneously from the southeast, the southwest and the north.[123] There were about 20 or 25 villagers entrenched east of the village at the time. A member of this group, ᶜUthman al-Jashah, reported what happened when the Zionists attacked:

> They were too many and well armed. After all didn't they occupy most of the villages along the coast, including the town of Acre? We decided to hide and not to fire.... We later retreated to Tarshiha.[124]

When the Jews entered the village, they captured a few of the villagers who could not make their way to the orchards. Aminah Muhammad Musa (Umm Saᶜd Radi) was one of those who got out in time. Her story is worth giving in full.

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[122] Arab losses were two Arab Liberation Army soldiers and one villager killed and two injured. ᶜUthman al-Jashah, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 26, 1973.

[123] Most of the people of Kabri had fled to Tarshiha soon after the fall of Acre. Only a handful remained. Aminah Muhammad Musa, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 23, 1973.

[124] ᶜUthman al-Jashah, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 23, 1973.

My husband and I left Kabri the day before it fell. We walked a few hours to the east on the main Kabri-Tarshiha road. As it got dark, my husband suggested that we spend the night in the village orchard and proceed after the morning prayer. He said that no harm would come to us if we spent the night there. At dawn, while my husband was preparing for his morning prayer, our friend Raja passed us and urged us to proceed, saying that we should run. My husband made his prayers, then we started to walk towards Tarshiha. It was not too long before we were met by the Jews, who were coming from the north and south towards Kabri. They stopped and searched us. We had no weapons. They took my jewelry — gold earrings, a necklace, and four bracelets and forty pounds we had with us. One of the Jews, who spoke broken Arabic, kept saying: "I will give this necklace to habibti [my girl friend]." I did not say a word to him because I knew they were our enemies and that they had no mercy on us. Another soldier said, as the shelling started, destroying almost everything: "Kuwayis, kuwayis Kabri." [Expressing delight at the shelling of Kabri.] They took us and a few other villagers (Ibrahim Dabajah, Hussain Hassan al-Khubaizah, his wife, and three children, and a man from the village of En Nahr called Khalil al-Tamlawi) in an armoured car back to the village. There a Jewish officer interrogated us and, putting a gun to my husband's neck, he said: "You are from Kabri?" We told him that we were from the village of Sheikh Dawud. However, ʿAli Abu ʿAziz of the village of El Ghabisiya, who was working for the Jews, said that we were lying and that we were from Kabri. The Jews took away my husband, Ibrahim Dabajah, Hussain Hassan al-Khubaizah, Khalil al-Tamlawi, ʿUthman Ibin Asʿad Mahmud, and Raja. They left the rest of us — Umm Hassan Dabajah, Abu Ismaʿil ʿArkih, Qassim Shahinih, Umm Khaznih Dabur, Umm Hussain Hassan al-Khubaizah, and myself — on the main Kabri-Tarshiha road. The Jewish soldiers were dancing in the streets.... They came to us and asked us about our boys.... An officer came and asked me not to cry. He said he would bring my husband back, except that he had already been killed.... He showed me a picture of Faris Sirhan and asked me if I knew him.... "Tell Faris," he said, "we will occupy Palestine and will follow him to Lebanon." We slept in the village orchards that night. The next morning, Umm Hussain and I went to the village. The chickens were in the streets, and Umm Hussain suggested that go and bring some water. I saw Umm Taha on my way at the village courtyard. She cried and said: "You had better go see your dead husband." I found him. He was shot in the back of the head. I pulled him into the shade and went to bring Umm Hussain to help me bury him. I did not

know what to do. I could not dig a grave for him. We carried him on a piece of wood to the cemetery and buried him sideways in his mother's grave.... Until today I worry and pray that I buried him the right way, in the proper position.[125] I stayed in Kabri six days without eating anything. I decided to leave and join my sister, who had fled earlier with her family to Syria. I asked Abu Isma'il 'Arkih, an elderly man, to accompany me to Tarshiha, and he did. We left the others in the village. I do not know what happened to them. Abu Isma'il remained with his son in Tarshiha, and I proceeded to Syria.[126]

El Ghabisiya

El Ghabisiya is a village about twelve kilometers northeast of the city of Acre, and its population was estimated on December 31, 1944, at 1,240 Arabs.[127]

The people of El Ghabisiya fought with the villagers of Kabri against the Jewish convoy to Kh. Jiddin on March 28, 1948, hoping to prevent an attack on their own village. As usual, the villagers of El Ghabisiya were not well armed and had to depend on the Arab regulars, stationed at Kabri, and on other volunteers. Their strength was estimated at 40 men sharing among them 30 rifles of different makes and one Bren gun,[128] and between 40 and 60 rounds of ammunition each.

At dawn on May 21, the Zionists approached El Ghabisiya from the north and southeast.[129] They captured 'Uthman As'ad 'Abdul'al's house, in the southernmost corner of the village, and arrested the owner

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[125] That is, facing the city of Mecca.

[126] Aminah Muhammad Musa, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 24, 1973.

[127] It had a total land area of 11,786 dunums, with 11,771 dunums belonging to the Arabs and 15 dunums listed as "public property"; estimates include the population and land area of the neighbouring village of Sheikh Dawud. Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 40.

[128] The Bren gun and a rifle were salvaged during the fight in Kabri. A representative of the Arab Liberation Army came to the village and took the rifle from Ahmad Hijazi and the Bren gun from Dib al-Jish. My informant said: "That was the only time the Arab Liberation Army came to our village." Hussain Shahadah, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 26, 1973.

[129] Most of the villagers had taken their families to the neighbouring villages or to Lebanon soon after the city of Acre fell to the Israelis. Few remained in the village. Ahmad Dib Qassim, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 25, 1973.

and his son.[130] They shelled the village from the house, killing and injuring many of the villagers as they were fleeing.[131] Hussain Shahadah said: "We did not resist the Jewish soldiers; we were too few and very poorly armed. We decided not to confront the Jews in order to be able to retreat."[132]

Many of the villagers returned to the village a week after its occupation. Hussain Shahadah recalled: "I returned to get a few blankets, some pillows, and food for my family. We left in such a hurry that I was unable to take anything with me."[133] Most of the people of El Ghabisiya remained in Galilee until it was completely occupied on October 31, 1948. Then they moved to Lebanon.

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[130] About 20 armed men had stationed themselves in the village to confront the Zionists. Hussain Shahadah, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 23, 1973.

[131] *Ibid.*, February 22, 1973.

[132] *Ibid.*, February 26, 1973.

[133] *Ibid.*, February 22, 1973.

CHAPTER IV

THE FALL OF GALILEE: FROM LANDOWNERS TO LANDLESS REFUGEES

On the morning of June 11, the day the first United Nations truce went into effect, the Israelis captured the village of El Birwa and prepared to complete the occupation of Galilee.

El Birwa

El Birwa was a village on the Acre-Safad road, ten kilometers east of Acre with a mixed population of Muslim and Christian Arabs numbering 1,460.[1]

The people of El Birwa had followed the news of the fighting in Galilee with mounting anxiety. They had heard of the fall of Haifa, Acre, and the villages along the coast. They were told by the people of Tamra that "the Jews were mean and unkind to the old men, women, and children... that they killed a woman and her children in Tamra."[2]

Soon after the fall of Acre, the villages northwest of El Birwa—El Makr, Judeida, Julis, Kafr Yasif, and Abu Sinan — surrendered. The villagers of El Birwa decided to contact the nearby villages — Shaʿb, Miʿar, Majd el Kurum, El Biʿna, Deir el Asad, and Nahf — to organize a common defence against the expected Zionist offensive which would have El Birwa as its first target. At this time the people of El Birwa received a delegation composed of Arab Druze sent by the Zionists from Druze villages that had surrendered and had decided to cooperate with the Zionists. The Druze representatives advised them to

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[1] The total land area was 13,542 dunums, of which 12,939 belonged to the Arabs, 546 to Jews, and 57 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 40.

[2] Mahmud Saʿd, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 4, 1973.

do likewise. The villagers were unable to agree because they were divided into followers of the Darwish-Saʿd and al-Kaiyal families. Some favoured surrender and others were for fighting.

The people of El Birwa were not prepared for a Zionist attack. Their strength was about 40 men,[3] armed with different makes of rifles, between 30 and 40 rounds of ammunition each, and one machine gun.

The people of El Birwa prepared for the attack by taking their old men, women and children out of the village. Haj ʿAli Faiyad took his family as early as May 23 to the village of El Biʿna, about ten kilometers to the east. ʿAbid Bishir sent one of his wives with six children to Beirut on May 24 and sent his second wife and four children there a week later. Mahmud Saʿd sent his family to El Biʿna on June 1, while Najib Saʿd sent his on June 6. About 45 elderly people, both Muslim and Christian, stayed on in the village, hiding in the church with Father Jibran.

On the afternoon of June 10, three armoured cars approached El Birwa from the west. As they came closer, the villagers began shooting at them, forcing the Zionists to turn back. At about sunset, the Zionists, now numbering over 100 men, returned. The villagers were only able to engage the attacking force for a short time. Mahmud Saʿd said: "We ran out of ammunition and did not know what to do. Our men began to retreat one by one to the east."[4]

The Zionists remained on the outskirts of the village all night. At dawn on June 11, just before the first United Nations truce was to come into effect, the Zionists entered the village and occupied it.[5]

The villagers who fought left everything behind and retreated to join their families. But they did not expect the Zionists to stay in their village long. As Haj ʿAli Faiyad said:

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[3] ʿAbid Hussain Bishir, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, January 31, 1973, named 11 villagers as having had some military training, having been members of the British Police Corps or the Transjordanian Frontier Force.

[4] Many were killed although it is unclear how many. Five names were given me by Mahmud Saʿd, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 3, 1973.

[5] Fauzi al-Qawuqji, Commander-in-Chief of the Arab Liberation Army, gives 11 June 1948 (supported by my informants' accounts) for the fall of El Birwa. No. 153, July 12, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File. The Palestinian historian, ʿArif al-ʿArif, mistakenly and without any supporting data, gives the fall of El Birwa as May 23. *Al-Nakba,* II, 425.

> We left our homes open and our fields unharvested. We had great hopes of returning with the help of our brothers, the Arab Liberation Army, who were stationed at Tall al-Liyyat, about six kilometers east of El Birwa.[6]

The people of El Birwa waited about 13 days. During this time they depended upon the hospitality of the neighbouring villages. On the morning of June 23, the villagers decided to recapture their village. It was almost the end of the harvest time, and they wanted to harvest their fields before the crop was ruined. The news of the plan spread throughout the surrounding villages. My informants report that over 200 men and women assembled and made preparations to fight for the village and their harvest. About 96 men were armed with different makes of rifles, and they had about 30 to 40 rounds of ammunition each. Officer Jassim, an Iraqi of the Arab Liberation Army stationed at Tall al-Liyyat, gave the villagers some ammunition but told them he and his men could not join them because he had no orders. They then made their way through the Arab Liberation Army's lines marching towards the village, shouting *Allahu akbar,* "God is great."[7]

> The armed men were in the first line of attack. They were followed by the unarmed men who were carrying shovels, axes and sticks — they picked up the rifles of those who fell in the fighting. Behind came our women, carrying water to help the injured.[8]

When the shooting started, many people from the surrounding villages joined the attackers. ʿAbid Bishir said: "This is a local tradition. When you hear shooting you join in."[9]

The Zionists were taken by surprise; many of them were in the fields. The villagers attacked them from three directions: from Jabal al-Tawil, to the north of the village, from Shaʿb, to the southeast, and from Tall al-Liyyat to the east. The Zionists retreated to the village. The villagers pressed their attack, forcing the Jews back to Tall Kissan

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[6] Haj ʿAli Faiyad, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 4, 1973.

[7] My informants said that at this point, about 11 Palestinians of the Arab Liberation Army from the village of ʿAqraba deserted their unit and joined the villagers. ʿAbid Hussain Bishir, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, January 31, 1973.

[8] Mustafa al-Nimr, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 3, 1973.

[9] For further information, see Hisham Sharabi, *Palestine and Israel: The Lethal Dilemma,* (New York: Pegasus, 1969), p. 190.

and to the area of Abu Laban, about half a kilometer west of El Birwa.[10] In the village the Zionists left behind three positioned machine guns and seven mechanical harvesters in the fields of Ahmad Ismaʿil Saʿd that had been used to harvest the villagers' wheat, besides sacks of wheat gathered from the fields. In the house of Ahmad Isamʿil Saʿd and ʿAbid Darwish (where the Zionists had stayed), the villagers found bags filled with their wives' dresses and their own clothes, 20 to 30 fresh cups of tea, and a great quantity of canned food, sugar, tea, and coffee.

The people of El Birwa were delighted to find some of their wheat already harvested and packed in sacks. They rushed to take as many sacks as possible to their homes. Najib Saʿd reported:

> The reason why we fought for our village was because we were hungry. It was harvest time.... Why should we leave our crops to the Jews?... We tried to take the mechanical harvesters into the village. However, the Jews, west of the village, began to shoot at us, forcing us to leave them where they were.[11]

The villagers remained in the village for two days. On June 23, soon after they took the village, four United Nations representatives came to them carrying white flags. They spoke with Salim Asʿad ʿAbdullah, Musa Hurani and Ahmad Asʿad, formerly policemen during the British Mandate. The United Nations representatives asked to speak with the leader of the group who had attacked.

> We laughed... We told them that we had no commander, that this was our village, and that we had come back to harvest our fields and to take the village back from the Jewish invaders... They wanted to go through our village to speak to the Arab Liberation Army's commander at Tall al-Liyyat, but we stopped them.[12]

On the afternoon of the following day, about 100 Arab Liberation Army men entered the village of El Birwa. As they were approaching the village, they shelled the Zionist positions west of the village.

> We were so happy and proud to see our Arab brothers coming to help us. We knew that they would come to our aid and would not let us down. We were tired and nearly out of ammunition... The

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[10] Still, the villagers lost many killed. I was given the names of six killed and three wounded. Najib Saʿd, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 3, 1973.

[11] *Ibid.*, February 2, 1973.

[12] *Ibid.*, February 1, 1973.

> Arab soldiers were led by Officer Jassim and a Lebanese officer known as Mahdi... They were armed with modern weapons.[13]

Officer Mahdi complimented the people of El Birwa on their courage and fighting spirit, but he suggested that they leave and join their families in the surrounding villages for a short rest. "We thought he was sincere and trusted the soldiers of the ALA to protect the village," relates Mahmud Saʿd.[14] So for a second time the people of El Birwa left their village. That evening, the villagers heard shooting in the village. Mahmud Saʿd recalled:

> We wanted to return to the village, but some of us were confident that our Arab brothers, who were well armed, would withstand any Jewish attack. But before long, we saw them retreating from the village. We could not believe our eyes... They had come to aid us and protect our village; instead, they handed the village over to the enemy.[15]

The people of El Birwa remained in the surrounding villages. Najib Saʿd's family stayed on the outskirts of the village for almost a week before deciding to go north to Lebanon. His wife refused to go anywhere, hoping they would return to their home soon. Haj ʿAli Faiyad stayed on a month at El Biʿna after the village was occupied the second time before deciding to leave to Lebanon. Some villagers infiltrated into their village to "steal" some of their belongings from their homes. Others were not so successful. Najib Saʿb remembered:

> We came to Lebanon and life was not what we expected it to be. Conditions were bad. We had nothing to live on. I became desperate, and one night, I decided to leave my family and go back to the village to get some money I had buried outside my house before the Jews attacked... But I never reached my village. I was caught by the Jews and put in jail. I did not stay long in jail. One day, the Jews filled a truck with prisoners, blindfolded us, and drove us to the borders of Gaza... On our way, the Jews beat us and took our watches and rings. When we arrived at our destination, they assembled us, chose a man at random, and shot him in front of us. Then they ordered us to run as fast as possible

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[13] Mustafa al-Nimr, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 4, 1973.

[14] Mahmud Saʿd, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 2, 1973.

[15] *Ibid.*

> to the other side of the border and not to look back. They were shooting in the air, and I ran as I had never run before... I worked in Gaza for a short time, saved some money, and used it to travel back to Lebanon to join my family.[16]

In 1950, the Israelis, in accordance with Article 125 of the Defence Regulations of 1945, declared the village of El Birwa a "closed" area for security reasons. In 1972 Haj ʿAli Faiyad went to visit El Birwa.

> When I arrived there, there was no El Birwa. The village was levelled, and the few Arabs who had remained behind in 1948 had been transferred to other villages. The Jews had built a new village in place of ours.[17]

The Ten Day Offensive

During the first United Nations truce, which lasted for four weeks, the Syrians dug in at Mishmar hay Yarden in Eastern Galilee, while the ALA, reorganized into a more conventional army, was given responsibility for Lower Galilee. The Israelis anticipated a Syrian attack (to link their forces with the ALA in Lower Galilee and with the Lebanese army at El Malikiya) and prepared for the resumption of hostilities. On July 9, soon after the truce expired, the Israelis carried out the "Ten Day Offensive" in two simultaneous operations: Barosh ("Cypress") and Dekel ("Palm Tree").

On the Syrian front, Operation Barosh was not successfully carried out; it met, instead, efficient and coordinated counterattacks from the Syrians, which inflicted heavy casualties on the Israeli force. To complete the occupation of Western Galilee and to destroy the ALA's strongholds in Lower Galilee, the Haganah High Command ordered Haim Laskov, commanding the experienced but newly formed Anglo-Saxon Brigade, to launch Operation Dekel, together with four additional battalions.

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[16] Najib Saʿd, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 1, 1973.

[17] El Birwa was converted into an Israeli settlement in 1950 and is now inhabited by Yemeni Jews. See Sayigh, *Buldaniyat Filastin al-Muhtalah*, p. 20.

Kuweikat

Kuweitat was a village in Western Galilee about nine kilometers northeast of the city of Acre, with a population of 1,050 Arabs.[18]

The people of Kuweikat took part in the war before the war came to them. A few of the villagers fought in the battle at Kabri on March 28, 1948, and others had participated in the defence of Acre, a city they depended on for marketing their produce.[19]

Shortly before the first United Nations truce went into effect, a Zionist force attacked the village of Kuweikat but was repulsed, leaving behind some ammunition which the villagers happily took.[20]

As in most villages in Palestine, the people of Kuweikat were poorly armed. The village strength was estimated at between 55 and 65 men,[21] armed with 35 to 50 assorted rifles and one Bren gun,[22] with between 40 to 60 rounds of ammunition for each man. Khalil Ibrahim al-Jish, formerly a policeman and a member of the village militia, recalled:

> We travelled to Lebanon and Syria to buy our ammunition. Many of the bullets we had were duds. My duty was to refill the villagers' cartridges with gun-powder and fit them with bullets that had already been fired. In this way, we were able to reuse our own bullets as well as spent Jewish cartridges... The Jews fired a great many bullets, so that it was not too difficult to find them on the bare ground.[23]

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[18] It had a total land area of 4,733 dunums, with 4,668 dunums belonging to the Arabs and 65 dunums listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 40.

[19] Haj Fayiz Barakji, formerly a policeman and a member of the village militia, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 12, 1973.

[20] I was told that between 15 and 20 families left the village soon after the attack; most of them, however, returned to the village during the truce. Hassan Ahmad ʿAbdullatif, a farmer, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 13, 1973.

[21] Only six of the men had any military training, according to Muhammad al-Nabulsi, a farmer and a member of the village militia, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 12, 1973.

[22] It was owned by three persons. Muhammad al-Nabulsi, one of them, said: "I paid 125 Palestinian pounds of the total price of 230 Palestinian pounds that we paid for the gun..., provided I could keep it. Having the only gun of its kind in the village brought me great prestige and the envy of the other villagers." *Ibid.*, February 13, 1973.

[23] Khalil Ibrahim al-Jish, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 12, 1973.

During the truce, between seven and ten representatives of the ALA, stationed at Tarshiha, came to the village for an overnight visit. They met the village militia and suggested that the militia entrench themselves around the village. Muhammad al-Nabulsi reported:

> We were told not to let anyone, including the old men, women and children, out of the village. The ALA advised us that this would encourage the militia to fight better... Almost all the militia were on the alert at all times. We were attacked soon before the truce went into effect and expected the Jews to attack us again... five or six of us would line up, firing one immediately after the other in order to fool the Israelis (along the coast) into thinking that we were all armed, even having machine guns, to scare them off from attacking us.[24]

On July 9, the first day after the truce ended, Kamal Hamadih, known to collaborate with the Israelis, was seen in the village with four armed Arabs. They were carrying a message from the Zionists to Salim Ghadban, mukhtar of the village, asking him to surrender. The mukhtar did not dare ask the villagers about it and immediately rejected the offer. The mukhtar was afraid that he would be accused of treason. Khalil Ibrahim al-Jish reported:

> That day, the mukhtar and I were discussing the terrible conditions prevailing... How Acre and many villages west and south of our village were in Jewish hands. Khalil Khalid Isnubir, listening to our conversation, interrupted us and asked: "Are you conspiring to surrender the village to the Jews?" He threatened to expose us to the ALA in Tarshiha.[25]

During the night of July 9-10, the Israelis shelled Kuweikat.[26] Soon after, they encircled the village from three directions, leaving the east direction open. Hassan Ahmad ʿAbdullatif recalled:

> We were awakened by the loudest noise we had ever heard, shells exploding and artillery fire... the whole village was in panic... women were screaming, children were crying... Most of the

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[24] Muhammad al-Nabulsi, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 13, 1973.

[25] Khalil Ibrahim al-Jish, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 12, 1973.

[26] Two persons were killed and two others injured by the shelling. Hassan Ahmad ʿAbdullatif, a farmer, and Muhammad al-Nabulsi, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 13, 1973.

villagers began to flee with their pajamas on. The wife of Qassim Ahmad Saʿid fled carrying a pillow in her arms instead of her child... When she realized that her son was missing, she screamed louder and begged her husband to return to the house and bring the child. Between five and ten elderly people remained in the village with less than 30 armed men.[27]

The Israelis continued their heavy shelling as they moved towards the village. A few of the village militiamen were positioned at Muhammad Rajab al-Jish's house, southeast of the village, and the rest were at ʿAwad Baitam's house, to the west. Haj Fayiz Barakji recalled:

> We were surrounded in three directions. We thought it would be safer to retreat to Kharub al-Qais, a hilly area, with Abu Sinan to the east, ʿAmqa to the north and Kuweikat to the west. We remained there all day, hoping that the ALA would join us to recapture our village.[28]

Muhammad al-Nabulsi added:

> While we were at Kharub al-Qais, two Jewish armoured cars came towards ʿAmqa. Since we overlooked the road, we began to shoot at them, forcing them to retreat. During the night, the Jews shelled ʿAmqa, also forcing its villagers to flee.[29]

The militia remained at Kharub al-Qais for almost four days, expecting the ALA to join them. Haj Fayiz Barakji recalled:

> We could not hold out any longer. I left for the village of Yirka to join my family, but they were not there. I was told that they had left and were heading towards Jatt, to the north. On the way there, I found them under an olive tree. We were happy to see each other. We stayed there for two days and then left to Deir el-Qasi. There we met the people of Saffuriya fleeing north... they told us that their village had been captured and that the Jews had taken Nazareth too. Together with the people of Deir al-Qasi, we also left for Lebanon.[30]

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[27] Hassan Ahmad ʿAbdullatif, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 13, 1973.

[28] Eyewitness Haj Fayiz Barakji, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 12, 1973.

[29] Eyewitness Muhammad al-Nabulsi, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 13, 1973.

[30] Eyewitness Haj Fayiz Barakji, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 12, 1973.

Many of the villagers remained in the villages of Abu Sinan, Kafr Yasif, Yirka, and Jatt. They lived with the Druze inhabitants of these villages who had surrendered to the Israelis. The women of Kuweikat often infiltrated back to the village to bring food and clothes for their children. Those villagers who remained in Kuweikat during the night of the attack (mostly elderly people) were expelled to the village of Abu Sinan. Khalil Ibrahim al-Jish recounted:

> I did not stay at Abu Sinan because of my family's honour. I could not let my wife sneak back at night to the village to bring us food. My brother-in-law remained at Abu Sinan permanently.[31]

During the night of July 9-10, the Israelis shelled Tall Kissan, about three kilometers east of the Acre-Haifa road, and captured it.[32] To broaden the coastal strip, the Israelis began their offensive eastward along the El Birwa-Er Rama road. On July 11, they attacked the village of Majd el Kurum.[33] Arab resistance was fierce, and it delayed the Israeli advance. On July 13, the Israelis turned to the southeast and attacked the Druze village of Shafa ʿAmr. "The village fell to a combined attack of armour moving along the main road with infantry penetrating from the rear, following an artillery bombardment intended for the Muslim quarter only."[34] The village was captured at 9 p.m. on July 14, clearing the road to Saffuriya, about fifteen kilometers to the southeast.[35]

Saffuriya

Saffuriya, "a bird on top of a hill," is a village about six kilometers northwest of Nazareth. It had a population of 4,330 Arabs.[36]

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[31] Khalil Ibrahim al-Jish, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 13, 1973.

[32] No. 109, July 10, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[33] *Ibid.*, No. 4, July 11, 1948.

[34] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 324.

[35] No. 161, July 14, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[36] Of its total land area of 55,378 dunums, 41,748 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 13,630 were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 63.

News of the war reached the villagers from a loudspeaker at the village *diwan*, connected to a radio operating off an automobile battery in the mukhtar's house. The reaction of the villagers to Israeli advances was one of concern. However, most villagers felt uninvolved; the war was far away. During the night of July 14-15, when the town of Shafa ʿAmr fell to the Israelis, as many as 2,500 of its people came to Saffuriya, some discovering only when they reached the village that they had left behind them some of their family. The villagers were utterly confused. Shaikh Salih Muhammad Mauʿad, the village mukhtar, reported:

> The war was no longer far away. Almost everyone in the village was worried and horrified. I decided to meet with Abu Mahmud Saffuri, of the Jaish al-Jihad al-Muqqadas ("Holy War Army"), stationed at Saffuriya, to inquire about the military preparations they had made to defend the village. He assured me that the Shafa ʿAmr-Saffuriya road had been mined and that his men, estimated at 120, would be able to withstand the Jewish attack for a few days, and by then, the ALA would have joined them to save the village.[37]

During the night of July 15, three Israeli planes bombed Saffuriya.[38] Salih Muhammad Nassir, a farmer and quartermaster for the village militia, recalled:

> Three Jewish planes flew over the village and dropped barrels filled with explosives, metal fragments, nails and glass. They were very loud and disrupting... They shook the whole village, broke windows, doors, killed or wounded some of the villagers and many of the village livestock. We expected a war but not an air and tank war.[39]

The shelling and artillery bombardment of the village continued sporadically throughout the night as the Israelis advanced. All night long the villagers were evacuating their homes to hide in the orchards,

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[37] Eyewitness Mukhtar Shaikh Salih Muhammad Mauʿad, interviewed at al-Ghaziyih, Lebanon, January 7, 1973.

[38] During the night of the attack, Officer Mahdi of the ALA at Nazareth advised Qawuqji that he would be unable to rescue Saffuriya, for fear that the Israelis would cut the Saffuriya-Nazareth road, thus weakening the ALA position in Nazareth. He urged that Saffuriya be saved because of its strategic position. No. 10, July 16, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[39] I was given the names of 11 persons killed and 4 wounded. Salih Muhammad Nassir, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp. Sidon, Lebanon, January 20, 1973.

about two kilometers north and east of the village. Umm ʿAli al-ʿAbid recalled:

> We fled with everyone else to the village orchards during the night. Abu ʿAli refused to join us and chose to wait for our son ʿAli, who was fighting the Jewish invaders with the other villagers. At dawn, Abu ʿAli and our son who had been wounded joined us and together we left to Lebanon.[40]

A few of the villagers took their families to the orchards and returned to defend the village. Haj Mustafa Mauʿad recounted:

> I fled with my elder brother, Faiyad, and our families during the night to Zaharah Forest, about eight kilometers to the north. I left my brother with my family and returned that night with Hussain Ibin ʿAli al-Ghuz. We stayed in the village fighting the Jews until the village fell at dawn.[41]

The villagers thought they were prepared for the Israeli offensive. The village strength was estimated at between 135 and 150 men,[42] armed with 125 varied rifles, 15 machine guns, one cannon (owned by the mukhtar), 50 explosives, and altogether about 1,500 rounds of ammunition.[43] Salih Muhammad Nassir reported:

> We counted on the ALA stationed at Nazareth, about six kilometers away, to come to our rescue... they did not. We were disorganized... We fought independently, every man for himself. There was no communication or coordination among us.[44]

On the morning of July 16, after the village had fallen to the Israelis, many villagers who had hidden in the orchards all night, decided to leave north or east, meeting at the village of ʿArraba. The mukhtar, Shaikh Salih Muhammad Mauʿad, decided to spend the night in the orchards; he recalled:

> It was too hazardous for us to stay in the village orchards. My family and I, accompanied by my younger brother, Mauʿad Muhammad Mauʿad, and his family, decided to go to the village

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[40] Eyewitness Umm ʿAli al-ʿAbid interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, January 20, 1973.

[41] Eyewitness Haj Mustafa Mauʿad, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, January 7, 1973.

[42] Four men were named as having had any systematic training. Mauʿad Muhammad Mauʿad, a teacher, interviewed at al-Ghaziyih, Lebanon, January 12, 1973.

[43] Estimated by Saffuriya's quartermaster, Salih Muhammad Nassir, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, January 21, 1973.

> of Mash-had, about five kilometers to the east and spend the night there. We were so panicked, confused and worried... we lost our way to Mash-had. We walked all night, and at dawn we ended up at the Deir Hanna-ᶜArraba road, to the north. We met the other villagers there, and together we left north to the villages of Er Rama, El Buqeiᶜa, Suhmata, Deir el Qasi, and then to Bint Jubail in Lebanon. At the Lebanese border, Lebanese soldiers refused to let us into the country. We were disturbed and we fought our way into Lebanon, our women and children leading the way.[45]

Only a few of the villagers returned to the village after its occupation. Haj Mustafa Mauᶜad reported:

> Two days after the village fell to the Jews, my brother Faiyad, Hassan Shublak, and I made our way at night into the village, to bring out a few of our personal belongings. We met a few elderly villagers who had remained in the village because they were unable to escape. We did not see any Jewish soldiers, but as we were leaving the village, they shot at us and killed my friend Hassan.[46]

The people of Saffuriya feel that they were betrayed by the ALA and the Arab armies. They feel that they had armed themselves well enough but were not capable of withstanding a Zionist air and tank attack. The mukhtar, Shaikh Salih Muhammad Mauᶜad, sitting together with Haj Mustafa Mauᶜad, Salih Muhammad Nassir and Mauᶜad Muhammad Mauᶜad, complained:

> The Arab countries repeatedly promised to enter Palestine on May 15, soon after the British vacated the country. We counted on their support but they did not come to our rescue. They should have trained and armed us to defend our villages as the Mufti demanded... We might have done better.[47]

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[44] *Ibid.*, January 21, 1973.

[45] Eyewitnesses Mukhtar Shaikh Salih Muhammad Mauᶜad and Mauᶜad Muhammad Mauᶜad, interviewed at al-Ghaziyih, Lebanon, January 12, 1973.

[46] Haj Mustafa Mauᶜad, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, January 20, 1973.

[47] Mukhtar Shaikh Salih Muhammad Mauᶜad, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, January 20, 1973.

Nazareth

On June 7, the Lebanese army recaptured the border village of El Malikiya. The gate to Galilee was reopened and Nazareth became the center for the ALA in Lower Galilee.

The city of Nazareth had a population of 14,200 Arabs and a total urban land area of 4,988 dunums.[48] The people of Nazareth were not alarmed by the threat of a Zionist attack, and thus they were not well armed.[49]

Shukri ʿAssal, a driver recalled:

> We were not worried...We believed that Nazareth, a holy city, like Bethlehem and Jerusalem, would be internationalized. We also believed that Nazareth would be a part of Arab Palestine as stated in the United Nations partition plan.[50]

Between July 9 and 13, the ALA was busy fighting the Israelis at Sejera. On July 14-15, the Israelis captured the village of Shafa ʿAmr. Simultaneously, a sub-unit of the Golani brigade made a diversionary attack from the settlement of Nahalal and occupied Maʿlul, thereby connecting Kefar ha Horesh with the settlements south and west of Nazareth.

> The move was enough to convince Qawuqji that Zahal was about to attack Nazareth from the south, the direction of the Valley of Jezreel. The southern approaches to Nazareth were well defended by the police fortress, the largest built by the British authorities, and by fortifications prepared during preceding months.[51]

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[48] 4,398 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 590 dunums were registered as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 62.

[49] As of early June 1948, the city had about 400 militiamen distributed as follows: an infantry detachment entrenched south of the city between el Mujeidil, Yafa, and Nazareth; a detachment of about 120 men led by Abu Ibrahim al-Saghir, supported by the Arab Higher Committee, positioned to the west; a detachment of about 150 Palestinian villagers, led by Abu Mahmud Saffuri, stationed along the road between Haifa and Nazareth. Abu Mahmud was assisted by small infantry units at Shafa ʿAmr, Esh Shajara, Lubiya, and Hittin. They were supported by 150 Palestinians, formerly policemen under the Mandate, stationed in the city. Akram Dairi, an officer with the ALA who served in Nazareth between June 7 and July 16, 1948, "Suqut al-Nasira wa al-Jalil" (The Fall of Nazareth and Galilee), *Shuʾun Filastiniya*, No. 21 (May 1973), p. 83.

[50] Shukri ʿAssal, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, May 28, 1973.

[51] Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 325. At dawn on July 16, exhausted from the fighting at Sejera, the Hittin Battalion, led by Madlul ʿAbbas (who was injured during the fighting), retreated to Nazareth to defend it. No. 157, July 16, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

At dawn on July 16, the Israelis occupied Saffuriya. Nazareth was now surrounded from the south, the west and the north by Israeli soldiers. Ilias Sruji, a physician, recounted:

> On July 15, we heard on the Israeli radio broadcast that Shafa ʿAmr had been captured and that the Israelis were advancing towards the village of Saffuriya. We panicked when we heard that Saffuriya had fallen. We knew our turn was next. We were ready to flee the city, but Officer Madlul ʿAbbas and his men, entrenched south of Saffuriya, stopped us and forced all the people to return to the city. A few people were able to flee during the morning of the attack,[52] but the majority of the people remained and hid in the various convents in the city.[53]

On the morning of July 16, Arab irregulars (estimated at between 200 and 300) were distributed as follows: a small detachment positioned north along the hills between Nazareth and Saffuriya; Abu Ibrahim al-Saghir with his men to the west; about 35 militiamen stationed at Schneller Hill to the northwest; and about 85 militiamen south and southwest of the city.[54] While the Israelis from the south and west of the city continued their shelling and bombardment, their armoured unit was advancing towards Nazareth along the Haifa-Shafa ʿAmr-Saffuriya-Nazareth road. Arab resistance, which had been slight, suddenly collapsed.[55] Bisharah Tannus, a mechanic, recalled:

> Arab soldiers fought the Israelis for only a short time. As soon as they retreated, Officer Samual Khamis, Father Basilius El Samman, head of Nazareth's Catholic community, Ibrahim Fahum, head of the Nazareth local committee, and Yusif Fahum, the city's mayor, went out and met the Jews and surrendered the city. Nazareth was saved from another massacre like Deir Yasin. Few Jewish soldiers entered the city. They were stationed at al-

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[52] Shukri ʿAssal told me that his wife and two children were able to flee from the city soon after they heard that Saffuriya was occupied. "My wife was Lebanese and it was easier for her to leave." He stayed in Nazareth until February, 1949, and then was permitted to join his family in Lebanon. Shukri ʿAssal, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, May 28, 1973.

[53] Ilias Sruji, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, May 30, 1973.

[54] Dairi, *Shuʾun Filastiniya,* No. 21 (May, 1973), p. 86.

[55] When news of the fall of Saffuriya was known, many local militiamen refused to fight or cooperate with the ALA. Yusif Fahum, the city's mayor, urged that all resistance be suspended. He felt that Nazareth could not be protected by the force it had and that such resistance would end in defeat and the city's destruction. No. 10, July 16, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

> Maskubiya, the police fortress, and the Schneller School. The city was placed under a curfew which was lifted for a few hours a day.... I remained in Nazareth until 1959. We were [as Arabs] humiliated by the Jews in our own country. We were only allowed to travel to Haifa with a pass and were not permitted to stay overnight outside of Nazareth. My wife and I decided to join our son in Lebanon... My brother is still in occupied Nazareth.[56]

Lubiya

Lubiya is a village on the main Tiberias-Nazareth road about eleven kilometers west of Tiberias. It had a population of 2,350 Arabs and a total land area of 39,629 dunums.[57]

The people of Lubiya were divided in loyalties between the Shahabi and the ʿAidawat families, the two largest in the village.[58] The villagers agreed to divide the responsibility of defending the village because Jewish convoys often travelled between Tiberias and Sejera. The Shahabi, who resided in the southwestern quarter, would patrol their quarter, while the ʿAidawat patrolled the northeastern quarter.

Early in February, a few villagers[59] decided to block Jewish traffic passing through the village. They attacked a Jewish truck loaded with grain en route from Sejera to Tiberias, killed the driver, and burned the truck with its load. Soon after, a bus loaded with Jewish soldiers attempted to pass through the village but was forced to return to Tiberias. Mithqal Hassan Mahmud ʿAidawat, a farmer and a member of the village militia recounted:

> The people of the village were not aware of the surprise attack on the Jewish truck... Earlier a few villagers had complained that the Jews had been making vulgar gestures with their hands and faces as they passed the village. Soon after the attack, a few English soldiers came to the site of the incident. Ibrahim Mansur was accidentally shot by a British soldier who thought he was going to

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[56] Bisharah Tannus, interviewed in Beirut, Lebanon, May 29, 1973.

[57] 32,895 dunums belonged to the Arabs, 1,051 to the Jews, and 5,683 were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 72.

[58] Eyewitness Haj Saʿid al-ʿAbid, a farmer, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 18, 1973.

[59] Six names were given to me by Mithqal Hassan Mahmud ʿAidawat, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 18, 1973.

[60] *Ibid.*, February 19, 1973. See Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence*, p. 320.

be shot by Ibrahim, covering them. We were disturbed by his death. Hassan Abu Dahash, our mukhtar, warned the British not to travel through Lubiya because we could not distinguish them from the Jews. Thereafter, the Jews switched their route, travelling further south on the Tiberias-Kinneret-Yavneel road.[60]

A few months later, the Jews occupied Tiberias and routed its Arab inhabitants. Then the villagers were also forbidden to go to Tiberias, and they began to look to Nazareth for help and leadership.

At dawn on June 9, the villagers were awakened by a plane circling over the village. Soon after, an Israeli armoured unit (estimated at between five and six armoured cars, an armoured truck, and a jeep), flashing lights, was seen advancing towards the northeastern edge of the village. As agreed, the villagers were to defend their own quarters. They had been busy during the previous days harvesting their grain. They had been expecting an attack but could not leave the fields unharvested to patrol the village. In the village, there were between 100 and 120 men[61] (including a small infantry detachment from the ALA), armed with 100 rifles of various makes, two machine guns, two Bren guns, two mortars with only two shells, and with between 70 to 100 rounds of ammunition for each rifle.[62]

The Israeli armoured unit continued to advance towards the village. When they were about half a kilometer from the village, they fired a white signal into the air. Only when they heard shooting did the villagers realize that an enemy infantry unit from Sejera was entrenched at the village's southwestern end. Mithqal Hassan Mahmud ʿAidawat recalled:

Had we not agreed that each should guard his own quarter, we would have been trapped and wiped out.... Our arms were not heavy enough to destroy the armoured cars. We kept shooting at their tires as they advanced. We blew out the tires of the armoured trucks and killed two of the drivers as they were fleeing from the cars. The remaining armoured cars retreated towards Tiberias. About ten of us remained in our positions while the rest rushed to the Shahabi quarter to help force the Jews to retreat to the southernmost sector of the village. A plain divided us from

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61 I was given names of 11 men with some military training by Haj Saʿid al-ʿAbid, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Lebanon, February 19, 1973; and Muhammad Ibrahim Diyab, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 19, 1973.

62 Fauzi Mahmud Abu ʿAlul, a farmer and a member of the village militia, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 18, 1973.

> the enemy... It was too hazardous to follow them. They remained at Hassan al-ʿAbid's house until dark and retreated towards Sejera at night. At the house, we found Hassan knifed to death.... Ahmad Hassan Dib found a wireless radio on the back of a dead Jewish soldier. He took it.... and when he heard a voice coming out of it that he could not understand, he screamed: "Your army is wiped out... why don't you send us another?"[63]

The following morning, a few of the villagers joined the ALA fighting at Sejera. Arab forces were on the offensive, and they captured strongholds in the north, west and east of the settlement, overlooking the road connecting Kefar Tavor and Sejera. Fauzi Mahmud Abu ʿAlul recalled:

> Subhi al-ʿAkut came late during the night and handed Hafiz Burini, commanding officer, an order to retreat, presumably because of the United Nations truce. At dawn, a Jewish plane circled over Lubiya and bombed the village. Officer Burini suggested that we go and join the villagers in Lubiya in case of another attack there. He assured us that he would be safe and gave orders to retreat.... As they were retreating, the Jews renewed the fighting, causing heavy casualties to the men of the ALA.... We were angry at what had happened, but for almost a month, the ALA did not try to take revenge.[64]

On July 16, five villagers arrived in the village and told the others that Nazareth had fallen to the Jews. The villagers were terrified; they had heard that morning that Saffuriya had been captured, but to hear that the "capital" had been occupied was a stunning blow. Mukhtar Hassan al-Dalash left the Maghar, where the ALA was stationed, and asked for military aid to defend the village. The villagers were refused arms because they "had no men in uniform."[65]

During the night of July 16-17, most of the villagers vacated the village. Only a few elderly villagers, along with a few militiamen, remained in the village.[66] Fauzi Mahmud Abu ʿAlul reported:

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[63] Many villagers from Lubiya were killed. Mithqal Hassan Mahmud ʿAidawat, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 19, 1973, identified 22 of the dead, including two from nearby villages.

[64] Eyewitness Mahmud Abu ʿAlul, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 18, 1973. See Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence,* pp. 189-90.

[65] Muhammad Ibrahim Diyah, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 19, 1973.

[66] Fauzi Mahmud Abu ʿAlul, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 18, 1973.

> My sixty-five year old grandmother, Fatimah ʿAbid, remained in the village ten days after it had fallen to the Jews. She said that after the armoured cars shelled the village, the Jews entered the village and destroyed more houses... a few Jewish soldiers stayed in the houses they did not destroy. The elderly took refuge in Umm Khanazir's cave. At night, she would go with Zuhrah al-Nuf to the village and bring food to the others. During the day, every time she tried to leave the cave, the Jews would stop her and force her back into it. On the night of the eleventh day, Zuhrah al-Nuf and she made their way out of the village, leaving behind the other elderly people in the cave... she does not know what happened to them.[67]

Mithqal Hassan Mahmud ʿAidawat and Muhammad Ibrahim Diyab remained in the village until it was captured. They recalled:

> Soon after the villagers heard of the fall of Nazareth, they fled north to Nimrin, ʿEilabun, and on to Lebanon. On July 16-17, when the Jewish armoured unit approached us, the village was almost empty. We were very few, our morale was low... we knew we could not withstand the attack and decided to retreat, leaving the village in Jewish hands.[68]

Hittin

Hittin, the famous site of Arab victory over the Crusaders in 1187, is a village about nine kilometers northwest of Tiberias. It had a population of 1,190 Arabs and a total land area of 22,764 dunums.[69]

The people of Hittin were very poorly armed. The village strength was estimated at 50 men (about 30 additional men from the ALA were also stationed there), armed with 50 assorted rifles, with between 25 to 50 rounds of ammunition for each man. Ahmad Mahmud Rabah, a farmer, explained:

> We were not threatened by our Jewish neighbours at Kefar Hittim. As early as November, when partition for Palestine was voted upon at the United Nations, they approached us and assured us that they did not want a war with us. They suggested

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[67] *Ibid.*

[68] Eyewitnesses Mithqal Hassan Mahmud ʿAidawat and Muhammad Ibrahim Diyab, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 19, 1973. See No. 10, July 18, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[69] 22,086 dunums belonged to the Arabs, 147 dunums to the Jews, and 531 dunums were listed a "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 72.

> that those who wanted war should go some place else so that we all could continue to work on our farms.[70]

The villagers heard of the Zionist intentions in Palestine on the radio belonging to Ahmad ʿAzzam Abu Radi, mukhtar of the village.[71] They heard Radio Amman and Radio Damascus, among others, repeatedly urging the villagers to resist Zionist aggression. The Arab armies planned to enter Palestine on May 15 to help fight the aggressors in Arab lands. The villagers felt emotionally involved, but for all practical purposes, they were detached from the war until June 9, when the Jews attacked the neighbouring village of Lubiya and were repulsed. As the Israeli armoured unit was retreating east, the militiamen of Hittin, positioned southeast of the village overlooking the Nazareth-Tiberias road, opened fire on the armoured cars, forcing them to retreat further to the settlement of Mitspa. About fifteen militiamen remained at the Horns of Hittin, while the rest returned to the village to join the burial prayer of their comrade, Muhammad Yusif al-Badawi. At the cemetery, the villagers heard shouts from the lookouts on the mountain. An Israeli armoured unit, accompanied by infantry, was advancing towards the village from the direction of Mitspa. Fadil Salih Shaiyabtah, a member of the village militia, recalled:

> We joined our lookouts on the Horns of Hittin. Numerically we were fewer, however our positions overlooked theirs... we saw every move they made. As they advanced towards us... we fought them fiercely for more than four hours and forced them to halt. A few of us[72] went down the mountain and dug in behind the rocks; when they opened fire, the Jews thought that they were trapped and decided to retreat.[73]

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[70] Eyewitness Ahmad Mahmud Rabah, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 20, 1973.

[71] The village had a few large and influential families. Rabah, ʿAzzam, Shaiyabtah, Saʿadah, Shaʿban, and Dahabrah. The villagers could not agree on electing a mukhtar and decided to elect a second mukhtar, Ahmad Qassim Rabah, to help represent and distribute the power among the villagers. Faraj Muhammad Naiyif, a farmer, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 19, 1973.

[72] Among them were Ahmad Qassim Rabah and Muhammad Khalid al-Imam. Eyewitness Fadil Salih Shaiyabtah, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 19, 1973.

[73] *Ibid.*, February 19, 1973.

Upon the fall of Nazareth, between 25 and 30 men from the ALA stationed at Hittin began to withdraw to the north. On July 17, Lubiya was captured and its villagers fled. The people of Hittin were terrified; during the night of July 16-17, shortly before the Israelis advanced towards Hittin, almost all of them evacuated the village. They left for Salamah, an area between Deir Hanna and Maghar, leaving behind a few elderly people, and between 30 and 35 militiamen.[74] During the evening of July 17, the Israelis, without any opposition, occupied Hittin.[75] According to one of the villagers, Fadil Salih Shaiyabtah,

> We remained at the Horns of Hittin until the last minute. We saw the Jewish armoured unit advancing... we were too few and had too limited a supply of ammunition to withstand the attack... During the first Jewish attack, many of the villagers used up all the ammunition they had... we were too poor to replace our bullets... We retreated to the village and with a few remaining villagers, we fled north.[76]

A few villagers returned to the village several days after the village had been captured. One of them, ᶜAli Salih Rabah, recalled:

> Five days after our village was taken by the Jews, Saᶜid Saᶜadah, Raziq Nafiᶜa, Abu Shuᶜaidad, Salim Mahmud ᶜAzzam, and I decided to return to the village to see if it were possible to recapture it. As we reached the outskirts of the village, the Jews stationed at Khalid Hassan Rabah's house, north of the village, heard us and began shooting at us... We were not able to go into the village and so returned to Salamah.... A few others returned... Ahmad Mustafa al-Ahmad and Hussain Hurani infiltrated into the village and brought their parents out.[77]

The villagers remained at Salamah for almost a month. They continued to hope that the Arab armies would come to their rescue and drive the Israelis out of their village. But as their days of waiting lengthened and their food supplies dwindled, the hope of returning faded, and together they left to Lebanon.

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[74] Ahmad Mahmud Rabah, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 20, 1973.

[75] No. 10, July 18, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[76] Eyewitness Fadil Salih Shaiyabtah, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 20, 1973.

[77] Eyewitness ᶜAli Salih Rabah, a farmer, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, February 19, 1973.

At dawn on July 18, the second United Nations truce went into effect. This truce was not subject to a time limit and was to "remain in force until a peaceful adjustment of the future of Palestine was reached."[78]

Almost immediately the Israelis violated the truce. The day after it came into effect, the Israelis continued advancing, entering Nimrin in the north and Ein Mahel in the south. On July 31, they shelled the village of ᶜAmqa and injured ᶜAliya Hussain al-Ghanim.[79] During the month of August, the Israelis continued their defiance of the truce and attacked the villages of Tarbikha on the lst,[80] Kafr Manda on the 19th,[81] and Kaukab on the 21st.[82] In September, they attacked ᶜAmqa for the second time on the 7th,[83] Sakhnin and Yirka on the 8th.[84] And on October 15, they launched Operation Yoav against the Egyptians in southern Palestine, capturing Beersheba, Beit Hanun, and Huleiqat.[85] On October 22, the United Nations called for an immediate end to the fighting, and a cease-fire was accepted by the parties. On October 28, however, the Israelis, breaching the ceasefire, carried out Operation Hiram (named after the King of Tyre, an ally of David and Solomon, who contributed to the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem, by sending cedars from Lebanon), with the objectives of capturing Upper Galilee and eliminating the ALA.

Shaᶜb

The village of Shaᶜb is about seventeen kilometers southeast of Acre. It had a population of 1,740 Arabs and a total land area of 17,991 dunums.[86]

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[78] Henry Cattan, *Palestine, The Arabs and Israel: The Search for Justice* (London: Longman Group Limited, 1969), p. 35.

[79] No. 2/19, July 31, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

[80] No. 22, August 1, 1948, *ibid.*

[81] No. 109, August 19, 1948, *ibid.*

[82] No. 114, August 21, 1948, *ibid.*

[83] No. 22, September 7, 1948, *ibid.*

[84] No. 37, September 8, 1948, *ibid.*

[85] See Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence,* pp. 419-30.

[86] 17,870 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 121 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 41.

The villagers of Shaʿb were horrified when they heard from the radios belonging to Muhammad ʿAli al-Khatib and Shaikh Amin Hamzah, mukhtars of the village, that Acre had been captured. Kamal Sulaiman ʿAbdulmuʿti, an assistant driver of the Shaʿb-Acre bus and a member of the village militia, reported:

> I could not believe that Acre had fallen to the Jews. I was there two days before it was captured. How could a city surrounded by a wall and with so many Arabs in it, fall so easily?[87]

The villagers watched the fall of the neighbouring villages to the west with anxiety. They expected an attack and decided to form a militia, headed by Ibrahim ʿAli al-Shaikh Khalil, commonly known as Abu Isʿaf. The strength of the militia was estimated at between 100 and 110 men,[88] armed with different kinds of rifles, two Bren guns, two machine guns, and an anti-tank gun, with between 30 and 50 rounds of ammunition for each man.[89]

On July 21, an Israeli armoured unit, positioned west of the village in the direction of El Birwa, began to shell the village. Soon after, Israeli infantry, entrenched in occupied Miʿar to the south, overlooking the village, advanced and captured the village. Muhammad Mutlaq Hamid reported:

> Soon after the Jews bombarded the village, destroying the houses of ʿAli Musa and Rashid ʿAli al-Haj Hassan, the villagers began to flee.[90] A few of us remained at al-ʿAdasiya, an area northeast of the village, hoping to recapture our village with the help of the ALA, stationed at Tall al-Liyyat, Majd el Kurum, Maghar and Er Rama... Six days after the village was captured, we regrouped and attacked the Jewish positions. We burned two armoured cars and forced the remaining six to retreat.[91]

Kamal Sulaiman ʿAbdulmuʿti recalled:

> Rim Muhammad al-Haj Asʿad wanted to return to the village to get a few of her personal belongings and some food for her

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[87] Kamal Sulaiman ʿAbdulmuʿti, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 12, 1973.

[88] Many of the men had had systematic training, having been members of the British Police Corps or the Transjordanian Frontier Force. Sixteen names were given me by Muhammad Mutlaq Hamid, a driver and a member of the village militia, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 12, 1973.

[89] *Ibid.*, March 11, 1973.

[90] A few elderly people remained in the village, unable to flee. *Ibid.*, March 12, 1973.

[91] *Ibid.*

> children staying at the village orchards. We tried to stop her, but she would not listen... She insisted on going, even if it cost her her life. It was her courage and determination that inspired us to regroup and attack the Jews... Although we lost many villagers... we regained our village.[92]

The militiamen remained in the village for over three months, but most of the villagers remained outside the village. Although the Jews at Mi'ar, overlooking Sha'b, opened fire on those seen entering the village, many still risked coming into the village to take things from their houses.[93] The village militia were joined by fifteen militiamen from the ALA, led by Abu 'Ali, an Iraqi, who had decided to leave their positions and join the villagers at the village. Muhammad Mutlaq Hamid recounted:

> These men were taken off the ALA payroll because they joined us without orders from the ALA High Command. We were happy to receive them... We extended our hospitality to them during their stay with us.[94]

The militia clashed with the Israelis on different occasions. During the month of July, the Jews attempted to recapture the village on the 26th[95] and the 27th.[96] In August, they attacked on the 16th,[97] the 19th[98] and the 31st,[99] and in September, on the 6th,[100] the 15th,[101] and the 29th.[102] However, neither the Israelis nor the militiamen of Sha'b were able to take over the positions of the other.

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92 At least nine villagers were killed and three wounded during the Jewish shelling of the village and the fight to recapture it. Kamal Sulaiman 'Abdulmu'ti, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 11, 1973.

93 Nimir Ayub, a farmer, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 12, 1973.

94 Muhammad Mutlaq Hamid, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 12, 1973.

95 No. 10, July 26, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File.

96 No. 38, July 27, 1948, *ibid.*

97 No. 90, August 16, 1948, *ibid.*

98 No. 108, August 19, 1948, *ibid.*

99 No. 148, August 31, 1948, *ibid.*

100 No. 28, September 6, 1948, *ibid.*

101 No. 24, September 15, 1948, *ibid.*

102 No. 91, September 29, 1948, *ibid.*

On October 29, the villagers were told that the Israelis had attacked the villages of Tarshiha, Jish, Maghar, Er Rama and El Buqeiʿa and that the ALA had begun to retreat to the north.

> Someone came from the village of Majd el Kurum and told us that the ALA had retreated from their positions at Tall al-Liyyat... that upon their departure, they had suggested that the villagers at Majd el-Kurum and the militia at Shaʿb retreat before the Jews sealed off the border with Lebanon and they became trapped.[103]

Muhammad Mutlaq Hamid described their motive for leaving:

> This is how we left our village. We did not confront the Jews... we did not see them. We retreated because we were afraid that our families would depart and leave us behind.[104]

As the militia went north through the villages of Majd el Kurum, El Biʿna, Deir el Asad, Kisra, Kafr Sumeiʿ, Suhmata, and Deir el Qasi, they met with their families, and together they left to Lebanon. Kamal Sulaiman ʿAbdulmuʿti and his family were at El Biʿna when it fell to the Jews.

> When El Biʿna and Deir el Asad were taken by the Jews, my family and I were in El Biʿna's orchards to the north. The Jews grouped us with the other villagers, separating us from our women. We remained all day in the village courtyard... we were thirsty and hungry. Two villagers asked permission to bring water to the elderly and the children. The Jews took the men to get the water, but they shot them instead. The Jews searched us, took what little money we had, our rings and watches, and chose about 200 men at random and drove away with them in trucks towards Er Rama. We do not know what happened to them. The rest of us were to proceed north to Lebanon. It was almost night.... El Biʿna's mukhtar asked the Jews to permit us to stay overnight, promising to leave in the morning, rather than travel at night with our old men, women, and children. The Jews rejected the mukhtar's request and gave us half an hour to leave.... When the half hour passed, the Jews began to shoot in the air... although they injured my nine-year-old son in his knee. We walked a few hours until we reached Sajur... We were terrified, the road was full of people in every direction you looked... all in a hurry to get

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103 Eyewitness Kamal Sulaiman ʿAbdulmuʿti, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 12, 1973.

104 Muhammad Mutlaq Hamid, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 11, 1973.

> to Lebanon. We decided to stay in Sajur's orchards. I could not find the few loaves of bread I had brought with me to feed my children. They slept hungry that night. At dawn we continued to walk all day until we reached Beit Jann... its Druze inhabitants did not leave. I sent my two sons to beg for some food.... The Druze villagers of Beit Jann were very hospitable and generous with us. They offered us food and water, and they did not object to our staying overnight in their orchards. My children ate well. They did not ask for food until we reached Lebanon two days later... and for that I was grateful to God... Also on our way, Ibrahim al-Haj Hassan's daughter-in-law delivered a baby boy.[105]

Nimir ʿAyub's parents remained in the village under Israeli occupation until approximately December 1948. Ibrahim al-Faris and his wife were with them until the last minute. They told Nimir Ayub that one day the Israelis ordered all the villagers (including his parents) to get into an open truck. The Israelis drove the villagers in the rain to the village of Zububa, near Jenin. When they reached the border, the Israelis ordered them to cross to the Arab side. Many of the villagers were too sick to walk and were left behind in the rain. No one knows what happened to Nimir's parents.[106]

Majd el Kurum

Majd el Kurum is a village about 18 kilometers east of Acre, skirting the Acre-Safad road. It had a population of 1,400 Arabs and a total land area of 20,042 dunums.[107]

The villagers had anxiously followed the news of the war in Palestine on the radio belonging to Hassan Sirhan. Abu ʿAbid al-Qiblawi, a shopkeeper and a member of the village militia, reported:

> We extended our hospitality to the people from the villages surrounding Acre as they were fleeing north... They told us in detail of Jewish intransigence and their "vicious attitude" towards the Arabs. We had heard earlier of the massacre at Deir Yasin... We became frightened and began to arm ourselves, each

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105 Kamal Sulaiman ʿAbdulmuʿti, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 12, 1973.

106 Nimir Ayub, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 11, 1973.

107 17,828 dunums belonged to the Arabs and the remaining 2,214 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 40.

> family on its own. We all had different makes of rifles[108]... English, French, German, Russian... very few of us were able to buy ammunition for our rifles.[109]

During the night of October 29-30, the ALA began to retreat from the village on the pretext of inspecting the surrounding villages. Although they assured the villagers that they would return, the villagers did not believe them. Muhammad Hassan Furhan, a farmer and a member of the village militia, recounted:

> We knew they were not coming back. Why would they take their domestic animals and all their equipment with them if they were coming back? A few villagers and I went to see Officer Turki, commander of the ALA in the village, to find out the real reason for their retreat. Speaking to all the villagers outside the mukhtar's house, Officer Turki told us that he had been informed by the ALA High Command that the Jews had occupied most of Upper Galilee and he was ordered to retreat to Lebanon before the Jews blocked all the roads... Although he hesitated to retreat, he did not want to be responsible for any harm done to the soldiers... He concluded, saying that those were the orders of our Arab leaders and not his... As he departed, he advised all our young men and women to leave the village, while the elderly people stayed and carried white flags to avoid a Jewish attack.[110]

The villagers were horrified by the news. Mothers rushed to their sons positioned at Tall al-Liyyat, about one kilometer to the west, to tell them of the ALA's retreat and of Officer Turki's advice. The men were urged by the villagers to leave with their families. According to ᶜAbdulrahman Furhan:

> We knew we would be killed if caught with our arms. We were so discouraged when we heard that the ALA had retreated... We depended on them. We did not want to take any risks and decided to leave to Lebanon while we still had the chance. About 100 to 120 families left that night. We passed through the villages of Beit

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108 The villagers were not prepared to withstand an Israeli attack. They depended on the ALA, positioned at the police station about one kilometer east of the village. The village strength was estimated at about 60 men, armed with different kinds of rifles and between 15 and 45 rounds of ammunition for each man. ᶜAbdulrahman Furhan, a farmer, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, January 31, 1973.

109 Abu ᶜAbid al-Qiblawi, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 1, 1973.

110 Muhammad Hassan Gurhan, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, January 31, 1973.

> Jann, Sabalan, Hurfeish, Deir el Qasi... the roads were filled with people fleeing to Lebanon. The villagers we left behind on our way were worried. They said: "You have a head start, but our urn is next... we will catch up with you later."[111]

Almost all the villagers that fled left behind some relatives. Many of them could not leave because they were too old and were "afraid of dying in a strange land." Many others, who had never left the village before, were fearful they would starve; others, accepting their fate, chose to stay in the village. Umm ʿAbid al-Qiblawi was among those who remained in the village, staying for almost a week after it was captured. She recalled:

> During the morning of October 30, a few villagers decided to carry white flags and meet the Jews west of the village. They were to tell the Jewish soldiers that the villagers had gotten rid of the ALA and that the village was safe and prepared to surrender. We were surprised when suddenly another Jewish force approached the village from the east. The Jews joined up at the village and soon after ordered us to assemble at ʿAin Majd el Kurum in the center of the village. Jewish soldiers picked twelve of our men at random, blindfolded them, and shot them in front of us. I kept praying that my husband would not return to the village. One night, I joined about 60 families who had decided to leave to Lebanon where I met my husband... The Jews did not stop us from leaving.[112]

Few villagers returned to the village after it was captured. ʿAbdulrahman Furhan returned to the village a year after its occupation and stayed there for eleven days. He recalled:

> I infiltrated back to the village to see my parents and brothers and sisters, and to get some money to support my family in Lebanon. It was too dangerous to take my family back to the village. When I crossed the border at night, a mine exploded and injured my friend. I returned to the village with my family through the West Bank of the Jordan in 1972. We were not permitted to remain in the village.[113]

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[111] ʿAbdulrahman Furhan, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 2, 1973.

[112] ʾUmm ʿAbid al-Qiblawi, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 1, 1973.

[113] ʿAbdulrahman Furhan, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, January 30, 1973.

Abu ᶜAbid al-Qiblawi infiltrated into the village three months after it had fallen into Israeli hands and stayed in the village for almost a week. He recounted:

> I had nothing with which to support my family in Lebanon. I returned to collect some debts owed me by villagers who had shopped at my store... I knew crossing was dangerous... I knew a few who were caught and put in prison... I would not have minded being caught and expelled at the Lebanese border... I would have disliked being imprisoned or expelled at the Nablus [West Bank] border... From Nablus to Lebanon is too much of a trip to make.[114]

About half of the villagers left the village.

> I did not stay because I felt I would be treated inhumanely in my own home... though today we are not much better off... being refugees and stateless for so many years.[115]

Safsaf

Safsaf is a village about seven kilometers northwest of Safad. It had a population of 910 Arabs and a total land area of 7,391 dunums.[116]

The villagers were not prepared for an Israeli attack. The village strength was estimated at between 40 and 60 men,[117] armed with different makes of rifles, one machine gun, owned by ᶜAubaid Muhammad al-Shaikh, and about 45 to 50 rounds of ammunition for each man.[118]

When Safad was captured, many of the villagers of Safsaf panicked and decided to leave the village. According to Muhammad Talib Hammad, a former teacher,

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[114] Abu ᶜAbid al-Qiblawi, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, February 1, 1973.

[115] Abu Munir Ayub, a farmer and olive oil retailer, interviewed at Shatila Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, January 30, 1973.

[116] 5,344 dunums belonged to the Arabs and 2,047 dunums were listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 71.

[117] A few of the villagers had had some military training. Twelve names were given to me by Ahmad ᶜAbid Hammad, a farmer and a member of the village militia, interviewed at ᶜAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 22, 1973.

[118] *Ibid.,* March 24, 1973.

> We did not expect the Jews to take over our "capital." The city was well prepared... the occupation of Safad terrified us all. A great many of the villagers decided to leave the village. The establishment of an ALA garrison at our village encouraged the villagers to return to their homes. Although they remained worried, the ALA presence in the village sustained the hope that the Jews would be defeated and Safad, a city we depended upon so greatly, would be liberated.[119]

On October 29, a few hours before sunset, an Israeli plane flew over the village and bombed the Hills of Marj, about two kilometers east of the village, where the ALA was positioned.[120] Soon after, the Zionists began to shell the village from the settlement of ʿEin Zeitum, to the southeast. Ahmad ʿAbid Hammad was positioned southeast of the village during the Israeli offensive. He recounted:

> At about midnight, a Jewish armoured unit advanced towards the village from the south on the Meirun-Safsaf road. Simultaneously, an infantry unit advanced towards the village from the southeast through the village orchards. In their advance, one half of the soldiers would lie on the ground as the other half went forward... then the process was reversed. I never saw anything like that... At about dawn, we were surprised by another infantry attack from the southwest. We were unable to withstand a Jewish attack from three directions... We did not expect to fight them on three fronts. When none of the Arab armies joined the fighting, we retreated, together with the ALA volunteers to Lebanon. We left behind most of the villagers, many dead or injured, including my friend Muhammad Taha Zaʿmut, who was injured and later died when a bomb exploded near us.[121]

At about sunrise, the Israelis entered the village. There they ordered the villagers to line up around Ismaʿil Nassir Zaʿmut's and

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[119] Muhammad Talib Hammad, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 24, 1973.

[120] The ALA strength in the village was given to me as between 60 and 70 armed men. Most of them were volunteers from the Arab countries and were positioned at the Hills of Marj. At the village, they used Muhammad Talib Hammad's house as their headquarters. *Ibid.*, March 24, 1973.

[121] Eyewitness Ahmad ʿAbid Hammad told me that a few of the villagers left the village soon after it was bombarded. The majority, however, remained because the ALA blocked the way and forbade anyone to leave the village. Many villagers were killed. My informants did not know how many but gave the names of eight dead and four wounded. Jabir Muhammad ʿAbdullah Yunis and Muhammad ʿAli Khalil, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 22, 1973.

Ahmad Muhammad Shuraidah's houses, to the north. Umm Shahadah al-Salih, among those present, recalled that tragic morning:

> As we lined up, a few Jewish soldiers ordered four girls to accompany them to carry water for the soldiers. Instead, they took them to our empty houses and raped them.[122] About 70 of our men were blindfolded and shot to death, one after the othér, in front of us.[123] The soldiers took their bodies and threw them on the cement covering of the village's spring and dumped sand on them. I stayed in the village for almost a week... the Jews visited us once or twice. They told us that we might stay in the village if we wished, suggesting that we send word to our men to return to the village. Although they assured us that no harm would come to us... that we should forget about what had happened in the village, we did not trust them nor did we believe them. Every night, about four persons would leave the village without the Jews' knowledge. I did not want to stay... How could we forget what they did to our boys?... How could we open our hearts to them and really trust them?[124]

The people of Saʿsaʿ[125] saw the Israeli plane circling and bombing Safsaf and Jish. They even heard the bombs exploding. All night long, they heard the fighting. Muhsin al-Saiyad, mukhtar of the village between 1922 and 1938, recalled:

> We stayed all night watching out for a Jewish attack. Our armed men[126] did not go to the aid of Safsaf or Jish because we were

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122 Subhi ʿAwad Balʿus, a farmer from the village of Saʿsaʿ and now at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, told me that in 1955, some people from Nahir al-Barid Camp, Lebanon, came to his neighbour in the camp, Khalil Shararah, to ask for the hand of his daughter. Although the father did not object, he made it clear that his daughter was not a virgin because she had been raped by the Jews at Safsaf in 1948. Interviewed on March 26, 1973.

123 Muhammad Talib Hammad, Muhammad Khalid al-Salih, and Umm Shahadah al-Salih, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 23 and 24, 1973, recalled the names of 25 of them.

124 Eyewitness Umm Shahadah al-Salih, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 23, 1973.

125 Saʿsaʿ is a village about fifteen kilometers northwest of Safad. It had a population of 1,130 Arabs and a total land area of 14,796 dunums, 12,822 dunums belonging to the Arabs and 1,974 dunums listed at "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, p. 71.

126 The village strength was between 50 and 60 men (few had any military training), armed with different kinds of rifles, with between 40 and 60 rounds of ammunition for each man. Shahadah Muhammad Salih, a farmer, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 27, 1973.

> worried that the Jews would attack us from the west.... Our men remained in the village. At dawn, we were told by the retreating ALA and village militiamen that Safsaf had been captured. We could not stay because we were not prepared to defend ourselves and so decided to join them and leave for Lebanon.[127]

Tarshiha

Tarshiha,[128] a village about twenty-two kilometers northeast of Acre, was a stronghold for the ALA, particularly after Nazareth had been captured.

The people of Tarshiha had expected an Israeli retaliatory attack on their village ever since they joined the people of Kabri in attacking the Jewish convoy on its way from Nahariya to Kh. Jiddin on March 28, 1948. Mahmud al-Badawi, a farmer and a member of the village militia, stated:

> We expected a Jewish attack... we remained on the alert at all times, The village militia[129] was entrenched east and west of the village, while the ALA was to the southwest and the north. With the assistance of the ALA, we also mined the road leading to the village from the west.[130]

On October 28, shortly before nightfall, three Israeli planes bombed the villages of Tarshiha, Meirun, Safsaf and Jish. At sunrise, the following morning, the Israelis, in accordance with Operation Hiram, renewed their offensive and bombarded Tarshiha, while their mortars shelled the village from the west.[131]

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[127] Eyewitness Muhsin al-Saiyad, interviewed at ʿAin al-Hilwah Camp, Sidon, Lebanon, March 27, 1973.

[128] Tarshiha, with Kabri, had a combined population of 5,360 Arabs and a total land area of 47,428 dunums, 37,308 belonging to the Arabs, 90 dunums to the Jews, and 10,030 dunums listed as "public property." Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* p. 41.

[129] Many armed villagers had joined the militia at Tarshiha when their own villages had been captured. The village strength as of October 27, a day before the Israeli offensive, was estimated at about 200 men (few of whom had had military training), armed with different kinds of rifles, with between 100 and 150 rounds of ammunition for each man. Mahmud al-Badawi, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 8, 1973.

[130] *Ibid.,* March 9, 1973.

[131] No. 189/BA, November 14, 1948, Institute for Palestine Studies Archives, Qawuqji Letter File. Many villagers were killed as a result of the Israeli bombardment. 22 were identified by name by eyewitnesses Munib Samara and ʿAishah Ahmad Nadwah, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 9, 1973.

Although a few villagers began to leave soon after the Israelis bombed the village, most of them left after the Israeli offensive the following morning.[132]

During the night of October 29-30, the Israelis renewed their shelling of the village. Ahmad Kamal Agha, a farmer and a member of the village militia stationed west of the village during the attack, reported:

> The Jews bombarded our positions with their long-range mortars. We fired back at them, but our artillery did not reach their positions. We could not remain there long... My brother, the head of the militia, ordered us to retreat to the village. We met Officer Mahdi of the ALA at Fauzi Abu ʿIssa's house, north of the village. He was there with a few men... He told us that the retreat of the ALA volunteers was completed... that he had remained in the village because we were at the front line. We agreed among ourselves that retreat, under the circumstances, would be the best course of action. We told those villagers waiting in the village orchards until they could return to their homes, that we could not withstand the Jewish attack... that we were almost out of ammunition... and together we left north to Fassuta and then to Lebanon.[133]

Few of the villagers attempted to return to the village. However, Mahmud al-Badawi did.

> I tried to return to the village two weeks after it had been captured. On the way, I was caught at the Druze village of Yanuh, put in prison for two months, and then transported with a few others to the border near Jenin, and ordered to cross to the West Bank.[134]

With the fall of Tarshiha, the ALA retreated to Lebanon, and Arab resistance in Galilee collapsed. The Israelis quickly occupied all of the northern territory of Palestine, up to the Lebanese border, and Operation Hiram ended with its objective accomplished, the complete occupation of Galilee.

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[132] Sami Kamal al-Faʿur, a farmer and member of the village militia, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 9, 1973.

[133] Eyewitness Ahmad Kamal Agha, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 9, 1973.

[134] Eyewitness Mahmud al-Badawi, interviewed at Burj al-Barajnih Camp, Beirut, Lebanon, March 8, 1973.

The Demographic Transformation of the Galilee, 1947-1949.

Since the beginning of this century, Palestine has been undergoing a profound demographic transformation. The years 1947-1949 mark the pivotal point in this transformation. The demographic change occurring in Galilee exemplifies the drastic transformation effected throughout most of Palestine. The Arab population of Galilee on December 31, 1949, according to my projections, should have been 230,500.[135] This figure assumes no population displacement and excludes migration and the non-settled population in Galilee. If we include in our population projection the population of the Arab villages that were added to the Galilee District by the Israelis to form the "Northern District," the Arab population, as of December 31, 1949, should have been 267,332[136] instead of 105,000 as estimated from the Israeli government statistics.[137]

This sudden change in the population of Galilee was not the result of high mortality among the Arabs during the war (although the mortality rate was comparatively high from 1947 to 1949); rather it was the result of an act of displacement: Jews displacing the Arab majority. As early as May 1948, between 200,000 and 300,000 Arabs fled their homes in Palestine as refugees.[138] Almost 200,000 of the Arab population of the Haifa and Galilee Districts fled northwards into neighbouring Lebanon and Syria, increasing the population of Lebanon by ten per cent and of Syria by six per cent, while about 150,000 remained in all of Israel.[139]

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[135] In order to establish the Arab population of Galilee after 1946, I determined the natural growth rate between 1944 and 1946 of the Arab population in the Galilee District, based on the official estimates made by Palestine's Department of Statistics. Palestine, *General Monthly Bulletin of Current Statistics* (January-March 1946), p. 6, *ibid.* (May 1947), p. 240. See Appendix VII for tabulated growth rates, population projections, and methodology.

[136] See Appendix VII for the projected population of the Arab villages added to the "Northern District."

[137] The total Arab population in Israel as of December 31, 1951, was 173,433, with 113,749 or 65.63% residing in the Northern District. Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1949-1960,* No. II (Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics, 1960), p. 12; and *ibid.,* 1950-1951, No. 2 (1951), p. 4.

[138] United Nations, General Assembly, Ad Hoc Political Committee, 4th Session, April 5, 1949, *Palestine: Proposals for a Permanent International Regime for Jerusalem Area: Report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine,* A/838, Annex II, p. 3.

[139] United Nations, General Assembly, 6th Session, September 28, 1951, *Assistance to Palestine Refugees: Report of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,* Supplement 16, p. 1.

The report of May, 1949, on the age and sex of the refugees cared for by the League of Red Cross Societies in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan estimates that "children constitute over half of the refugee population in the League area, and women and children together account for three-quarters of the total refugees cared for."[140]

One of the principal results of the Arab-Israeli War, 1947-1949, and the Armistice Agreements, completed by July 1949 between the authorities in the Israeli-held territory and those in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, was the demise of the Palestinian state. Israeli-held territory (until 1967) totalled 20,418,023 dunums or 77.4 per cent of the total land area of Palestine, an excess of 5,660,374 dunums (37%) over the area allotted to the Jewish state by the United Nations partition plan of November 29, 1947. Jordan annexed 5,755,000 dunums (21.3%) of Palestine, transformed into the West Bank, and 350,000 dunums (1.3%) of the Gaza area came under Egyptian supervision, remaining the only portion of Palestine not annexed. It is estimated that out of the total Israeli-held land of 20,418,023 dunums, Jews owned 1,475,766 dunums, as compared with 7,587,198 dunums owned by Arabs, and 11,355,059 dunums registered as government-owned. Moreover, Arabs had the right to occupy or graze 583,378 dunums of the government land.[141]

Following the end of the British Mandate on May 14,1948, the Israelis began to acquire large areas of abandoned Arab land. As Sabri Jiryis put it:

> The best evidence of the great extent of the areas of land acquired at this period — the period of the Arab-Jewish War of 1948 — is the existence within Israel of the ruins of more than 250 Arab villages demolished after the expulsion of their inhabitants. In addition, of course, there are the lands of the Arabs who were expelled or fled from the larger towns.[142]

The Israeli Development Authority estimated the abandoned land in the Galilee area in 1948 at 978,843 dunums, distributed as follows:

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[140] United Nations, General Assembly, 4th Session, November 4, 1949, *Report of the Secretary General on the Assistance to Palestine Refugees,* A/1060, Annex II, p. 21.

[141] Sami Hadawi, *A Nation Uprooted from Its Soil* (Ramallah: Published by the Author, 1952), pp. 8-11.

[142] Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel, 1948-1966,* trans. by Meric Dobson (Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969), pp. 55-56.

Acre — 148,580, Beisan — 147,477, Nazareth — 86,393, Safad — 435,660, Tiberias — 160,731.[143]

The expropriation as state domain of these abandoned lands was justified by various articles, laws, and amendments. For example, the emergency article of December 12, 1948 was promulgated *ex post facto* to legalize the *fait accompli*. This law states:

> (b) the word "absentee" shall mean the following: 1. Any person who was a citizen of the Land of Israel and left his ordinary place of residence in the Land of Israel at any time between 29 November 1947 and the day on which it is announced that the State of Emergency declared by the Provisional Council of State is abrogated, shall be regarded as an "absent" if he left the country (during the above period) to: (a) a place outside the Land of Israel before 1 September 1948, or (b) a place inside the Land of Israel at that time occupied by forces that wished to prevent the establishment of the State of Israel or fought against it after its establishment.[144]

This law served as a convenient pretext to occupy more Arab property. A great part of Galilee and the Triangle[145] were within Arab (Palestinian) control until September 1, 1948. The inhabitants of these areas often crossed the borders of neighbouring countries. Those Arabs who had left their homes at some time during these ten months, but who returned home prior to the Israeli occupation of their area, were not permitted by the Israeli authorities to remain on their property. Therefore, almost half of the Arab population residing legally in Israel lost their land in accordance with this law.[146]

Another example is Article 125 of the Defence Regulations of 1945, which enables the state to declare any area "closed" for security reasons. In 1950, in Galilee alone, it was invoked in order to confiscate the lands of the villagers of ʿAmqa, Ed Damun, El Birwa, El Ghabisiya, Er Ruweis, Kafr Iʿnan, Kuweikat, and Miʿar in the Acre Sub-district;

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[143] Avraham Grannott, *Agrarian Reform and the Records of Israel* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1956), p. 254.

[144] Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel*, p. 59.

[145] "During the Mandate, the Triangle was that part of the Samaria District enclosing Nablus, Tulkarm and Jenin. In the 1948 war, the villages in the Triangle successfully resisted the entry of Israeli forces. However, in the Rhodes Agreement of 1949, half of the Triangle was incorporated by Israel. This Israeli Triangle, or the Little Triangle as the Israelis call it, lies about 25 miles to the east of Tel Aviv on the Jordanian border — Tr." *Ibid.*, p. 1.

[146] *Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.

El Mansura and Kafr Birʿim in Safad; Migdal in Tiberias; and Saffuriya in Nazareth. This law was also exercised to prevent the Arabs from returning to their homes, even by legal means, and to make them accept compensation instead. The "Emergency Laws (Security Areas) 1949" empowered the Ministry of Defence, with Knesset approval, to declare any part of the "Protected Areas" a "Security Area," permitting the expulsion of the inhabitants. In addition, under the "Emergency Articles for the Exploitation of Uncultivated Lands," promulgated on October 15, 1948, the Ministry of Agriculture may take possession of uncultivated land, to ensure that it is cultivated. Thus, lands "closed" to their Arab owners by Israeli laws may be redistributed to Jewish cultivators, and in time, ownership will be transferred to the state. Finally, the "Law for the Requisitioning of Land in Times of Emergency, 1949"[147] permits the government to requisition additional lands as needed.

These and other laws enacted by the Israeli authorities to legalize the *de facto* situation during and after the Arab-Israeli War, 1947-1949, continued to be implemented. Taufiq Tubi, a member of the Knesset, stated as late as 1964 that in the Galilee area, "since 1948, 418,000 dunums of agricultural land have been confiscated under the Absentee's Property Law, 70,000 dunums of (Islamic) Waqf land under the Land Acquisition Law [July, 1950], and 205,000 dunums under the Prescription Law [of 1958]."[148] These methods of land acquisition in Palestine are continuing until the present time.

147 *Ibid.*, pp. 65-74.

148 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: WHY DID THE ARABS OF GALILEE LEAVE?

The question of why a large proportion of the Arabs of Palestine left their homes during the war of 1947-1949 has been the subject of a heated controversy. The official Israeli position is summarized in the statement that "If the Arab states had not waged open war on Israel on the morrow of its re-establishment in May 1948, the Arab refugee issue would never have arisen."[1] The Zionists claim further that the Palestinians were urged or ordered to evacuate their homes by Arab officials.[2]

The latter claim has been effectively countered, and indeed shown to be spurious, by authors who have examined all the radio broadcasts in the area during the war, monitored by both the B.B.C. and the C.I.A. from Cyprus,[3] and three major Arab newspapers, the Egyptian *al-Ahram,* the Lebanese *al-Hayat,* and the leading Palestinian newspaper, *al-Difa*c[4] without finding any evidence to support the Zionist claim.

Mass exodus and dislocation are common wartime phenomena in even the most advanced societies and countries. The Palestine exodus thus to some extent could have been the result of a normal wartime panic. However, the Israeli refusal to allow the indigenous Arab

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[1] Government of Israel, *Refugees in the Middle East: A Solution in Peace* (New York: Israel Information Service, 1967).

[2] Joseph E. Schechtman, *The Arab Refugee Problem* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1952).

[3] Erskine Childers, "The Other Exodus," *Spectator,* May 12, 1961, pp. 672-75.

[4] Walid Khalidi, "Why Did the Palestinians Leave?" *Middle East Forum,* XXXV, No. 7 (July 1959), pp. 21-24.

population to return to their homes[5] — a refusal which continues to this day — is the ultimate solution from Herzl's formula for removing the Arabs from their homes and "gently" expropriating their property. Herzl, as early as June 12, 1895, wrote:

> When we occupy the land, we shall bring immediate benefits to the state that receives us. We must expropriate gently the private property on the estates assigned to us. We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it any employment in our own country.
>
> The property-owners will come over to our side. Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly.
>
> Let the owners of immovable property believe that they are cheating us, selling us things for more than they are worth.
>
> But we are not going to sell them anything back.[6]

At the turn of the century, the Zionists had begun an economic boycott of the Arabs in Palestine. Some spiritual Zionist leaders like Ahad Ha-am protested against this racial boycott:

> Apart from the political danger, I can't put up with the idea that our brethren are morally capable of behaving in such a way to men of another people; and unwittingly the thought comes to my mind: if it is so now, what will be our relation to the others if in

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[5] On 16 September 1948, The United Nations Mediator, Count Folk Bernadotte, recommended that "the right of innocent people, uprooted from their homes by the present terror and ravages of war, to return to their homes should be affirmed and made effective." Accordingly, the United Nations' General Assembly resolved:

> "...that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible;
>
> "*Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation...."

United Nations Document A/648 and Resolution 194(III), December 11, 1948.

[6] Theodor Herzl, *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, ed. by Raphael Patai, trans. by Harry Zohn (5 vols.; New York: Herzl Press, and London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1960), I, 88.

> truth we shall achieve 'at the end of time' power in *Eretz Israel?* If this be the 'Messiah', I do not wish to see his coming.[7]

Most Zionists, however, insisted on "a closed Jewish economy." Arthur Ruppin, Director of the Palestine Office of the Zionist Organization, beginning in 1908, and the Palestine Land Development Company, addressed the following remarks to the 11th Zionist Congress in Vienna in September, 1913:

> It is true that Palestine, with its twenty-three inhabitants per square kilometre, is a thinly populated country and could, with the right economic development, support four times its present population. But for the time being every inch of cultivable soil is in the hands of private owners and is in fact cultivated, even if only extensively rather than intensively; and in numbers the Arabs outweigh us by six to one. We can meet this numerical disadvantage by not permitting ourselves to be scattered at random throughout the country, but by concentrating on a few points and creating adjacent settlements there. It is only in this fashion that we can, within certain limits, achieve today the objective we have in view, namely, the creation of a Jewish milieu and of a closed Jewish economy, in which producers, consumers and middlemen shall all be Jewish. Thus our settlement policy in Palestine is clearly indicated for us. We must remain in the vicinity of the towns, in which there is already a large Jewish population, and we must try, by the creation of colonies close to, or in the general neighbourhood of the towns, to provide an economic hinterland for the town Jews.[8]

Military force was an intrinsic component of Zionist strategy for the occupation of Palestine and the eviction[9] of its indigenous

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[7] Ahad Ha-Am in a letter to Moshe Smilansky, November 18, 1913, cited in Hans Kohn, "Zion and the Jewish National Idea," *The Menorah Journal,* XLVI, Nos. 1 and 2 (Autumn-Winter, 1958), p. 34.

[8] Arthur Ruppin, *Three Decades of Palestine. Speeches and Papers on the Upbuilding of the Jewish National Home* (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1936), p. 62.

[9] Among ourselves it must be clear that there is no place in the country for both peoples together.... With the Arabs we shall not achieve our aim of being an independent people in this little country. The only solution is Eretz Israel, at least the western part of Eretz Israel, without Arabs...and there is no other way but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighbouring countries; transfer all of them, not one village or tribe should remain, and the transfer must aim at Iraq, Syria and even Transjordan.

Diary entry for 1940 by Joseph Weitz, published in "A Solution to the Refugee Problem: An Israeli State with a Small Arab Minority," *Davar,* September 29, 1967,

inhabitants. General Yigael Yadin, Chief Operations Officer of the Haganah and later of General Headquarters and one of Israel's chief strategists in the 1948 war, writes:

> Towards the end of April the situation in Galilee took a turn for the worse. It was clear that Safad must be taken before May 15, whatever the cost. We assembled a number of Palmach units, and, reinforcing them with some Field Force troops, organized an independent brigade, which was entrusted with the execution of what we called "Operation Yiftah," — to liberate Eastern Galilee and, above all, Safad and its environs.... In Western Galilee the situation was deteriorating.... Haifa Region and the Carmel Brigade were ordered to liberate Western Galilee in "Operation Ben Ami."[10]

In view of the ideology, proclaimed intentions, and actions of the Zionist movement in Palestine, and after an examination of the evidence presented in the preceding chapters, no other conclusion is possible than that the Arabs of Galilee — and indeed all the Palestinians made refugees by the 1947-49 fighting — left their homes as victims of a conscious and wilful Zionist policy.

In practice, this involved an organized campaign of exemplary terror; the spreading of rumours and psychological warfare; lethal attacks on the civilian population of Galilee, sieges of the larger towns, and the physical expulsion of large numbers of people after the military occupation of their towns and villages.

This can be illustrated by a brief recapitulation of instances described above of the use of such tactics in Galilee during the 1947-49 war:

1. *Terrorism*

Zionist terrorism in Galilee began soon after the partition plan was passed: December 18, 1947 in Khisas,[11] February 1, 1948 in Kabri,

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cited by Uri Davis, "Palestine into Israel," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, III, No. 1 (Autumn 1973), p. 89.

[10] Yigael Yadin, "The Stand of the Etzion Bloc in The Israel War of Liberation," in *Siege in the Hills of Hebron: The Battle of the Etzion Bloc*, comp. and ed. by Dov Knohl (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1958), pp. 368-70.

[11] Cf. Kimche and Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill*, p. 83.

February 15, 1948 in Saʿsaʿ.[12] On March 2, the people of El Manara were chased out of their homes. The Zionists left leaflets behind warning the villagers not to return to the village because it had been mined. At the adjoining village of Nasr ed Din, the Zionists destroyed all the houses, killing some of the inhabitants, including women and children, while forcibly evicting the rest.[13]

2. *Rumours, Panic and Psychological Pressure*

The Zionists utilized the spreading of rumours by Jews and Arab collaborators to scare the villagers into leaving. Yigal Allon writes:

> I gathered all of the Jewish Mukhtars, who have contact with Arabs in different villages, and asked them to whisper in the ears of some Arabs, that a great Jewish reinforcement has arrived in Galilee and that it is going to burn all the villages of the Huleh. They should suggest to these Arabs as their friends, to escape while there is still time. And the rumour spread in all the areas of the Huleh that it is time to flee. The flight numbered myriads.[14]

The villagers of Ghuweir Abu Shusha were persuaded by the neighbouring Jewish mukhtars of the settlements of Migdal and Genossar to leave to Syria or to the village of Er Rama, an area allotted to the Arabs in the United Nations partition plan. The villagers had heard how ruthless and cruel the Jews were to the people of Deir Yassin and the nearby villagers of Nasr ed Din. They were not prepared to withstand the Zionist attack and decided to accept their neighbours' advice and leave to Er Rama. They remained there until all of Galilee was captured, then together with the inhabitants of Er Rama, they were expelled to Lebanon. Hassan al-Zuʿbi, mukhtar of Kafr Misr, also advised the ʿArab al-Sabarjih to leave for Nazareth, an Arab city, to prevent further killings. Earlier, a few Zionist soldiers had infiltrated into the tribe's land and killed a man. In Safad, the Zionists spread false rumours that the Haganah had manufactured an atom

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12 *Ibid.*, p. 84.

13 Cf. similar actions in the villages of Samakh, Kafr Misr, Lubiya, Kabri and Saʿsaʿ.

14 Zerubavel Gilead, comp., *Ha-Sepher ha-Palmach* ("The Book of the Palmach") (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibutz Ha-Meuhad, 1953), II, 286, translated in Khalidi, *Middle East Forum*, XXXVII, No. 9 (November 1961), p. 82.

bomb similar to, but less powerful than the one dropped at Hiroshima.[15]

3. *Siege*

The city of Tiberias was under British mandatory control. Nevertheless, the Zionists besieged the city from April 3 to 16, isolating its Arab inhabitants from the rest of Palestine. This technique was also employed in capturing the cities of Safad, Beisan and Acre.

In Tiberias, together with shelling the city, the Zionists distributed leaflets discrediting the Arab leadership, urging Jewish-Arab cooperation, while threatening those who opposed it. Although the leaders of the Arab community in the city appealed to the British to break the siege and to end Zionist bombardment, the British announced instead that they would be responsible for the city's protection for only three additional days, offering the Arabs safe conduct and transportation to Nazareth or to Samakh. The panic-stricken Arabs accepted the offer because they had heard of what had happened at Deir Yassin on April 10 and in the adjoining villages of El Manara and Nasr ed Din.

In Safad, the Zionists besieged the city from the east and the south. For almost three weeks, they shelled the city with Davidka mortars. The psychological effect of being shot at from a range of twenty yards,[16] together with the fear of a repetition in Safad of ʿEin ez Zeitun and of the "Jewish atom bomb" triggered the Arab flight.

4. *Direct Attacks on Civilians*

Direct attacks on the villages of ʿEin ez Zeitun, Saffuriya, and Safsaf are notable examples of the techniques employed by the Zionists against Arab civilians in order to expel them from their homes. The villagers were often surprised and unprepared for the attacks. At ʿEin ez Zeitun, although the villagers surrendered, they were ordered to assemble at the village courtyard. The Zionists separated the men from their families, beat and humiliated a few villagers, crucified one of the villagers on a tree, and took at random thirty-seven boys as hostages, who were never heard of again. At sunset, the women and children were escorted to the outskirts of the village and were ordered to leave.

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[15] Cf. Koestler, *Promise and Fulfillment*, p. 215.

[16] Sacher, *Israel: The Establishment of a State*, p. 238.

Later at night, the men were told that their families had left the village, ordered to leave and join their families or stay and be killed. Firing was directed over their heads to make them run.

Rumours spread that King ʿAbdullah was responsible for the fall of ʿEin ez Zeitun, and that he was ready to have the Jews occupy Safad rather than see the Mufti form a Palestinian government there. Almost all of the inhabitants of the villages surrounding ʿEin ez Zeitun, including Ja'una and Teitaba, streamed out of their homes, fearful of another such attack, and unable to defend themselves.

The villagers of Saffuriya were horrified when Shafa ʿAmr was captured and about 2,500 villagers fled to Saffuriya. The Zionists attacked Saffuriya during the night of July 15. Three planes flew over the village and dropped barrel bombs which killed some villagers and much of the village livestock. The artillery bombardment of the village continued sporadically throughout the night as the Israelis advanced. All night long, the villagers were fleeing their homes to hide in the village orchards. On the morning of July 16, the Israelis entered the village. Many villagers who had hidden during the night decided to leave. Only a few of the villagers returned to the village but were driven away by the Israeli soldiers.

On October 29, a few hours before sunset, an Israeli plane flew over the village of Safsaf and bombed it. Soon after, the Israelis shelled the village, forcing the Arab forces to retreat. At the village, the Israelis ordered those civilians who remained to line up. A few soldiers ordered four girls to accompany them to carry water for the soldiers. Instead, they raped them. Then, the Israelis blindfolded seventy villagers and shot them, one after the other, in front of all the villagers. Although the Israelis assured the villagers that no harm would come to them, that they should forget about what had happened, suggesting that they send for their men to return to the village, the villagers were terrified and fled. How could they forget what had happened to their men?[17] At Majd el Kurum, too, Israelis ordered the villagers to assemble at the village spring after they had surrendered, and shot twelve of the villagers. Scores of families who had remained in the village soon left.

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[17] Cf. similar actions in the villages of Es Sumeiriya, Ez Zib, El Bassa, El Ghabisiya, El Birwa, Kuweikat, Lubiya, Er Rama, Shaʿb and Tarshiha.

5. *Direct Expulsion*

When the villagers refused to leave under Zionist pressure direct expulsion was frequently used. For example, the Zionists continued to shell the village of Et Tabigha until its villagers fled. Then they burned it to prevent its Arab inhabitants from returning. At Es Samakiya, the Zionists opened fire on the villagers, ordering them to leave east to Syria. As the villagers were leaving, the Zionists followed them, firing over their heads and making them run until they reached the Syrian frontier.

"Das Land Ohne Volk: Das Volk Ohne Land"[18]

In summarizing the reasons for the flight of the Arabs of Galilee, no mention has been made of the disorganization and division which bedevilled the Palestinian Arab policy, of the latter's dependence on assistance from Arab states which proved to be equally disorganized and divided, and of the demoralizing effect of these factors combined with poverty, lack of arms and ammunition, and the absence of a unified and resolute leadership.

When faced with the organized and meticulously planned offensive of the Zionists, Palestinian villages and towns were overrun one after another and their population expelled after only brief resistance. An interesting parallel can be drawn with events some 28 years later, in 1976, when in refugee camps — Tall al-Zaʿtar, Jisr al-Basha and Dbaye — and Lebanese slum districts — Karantina, Maslakh and Nabʿa — in East Beirut, besieged Palestinians originally from Galilee fought on tenaciously until food, water and ammunition were exhausted. In the end, of course, the result was the same: massacre and expulsion. But there is a striking contrast with the sombre events of 1947-1949, when the same people or their parents and grandparents, had taken flight when attacked without being able to resist effectively.

In conclusion, it can be said that the Arabs of Galilee fled before the offensive of a superior force because they had no adequate means to confront it. This has occurred in other societies in wartime, but the Palestinian flight is unusual because the force that occupied their land

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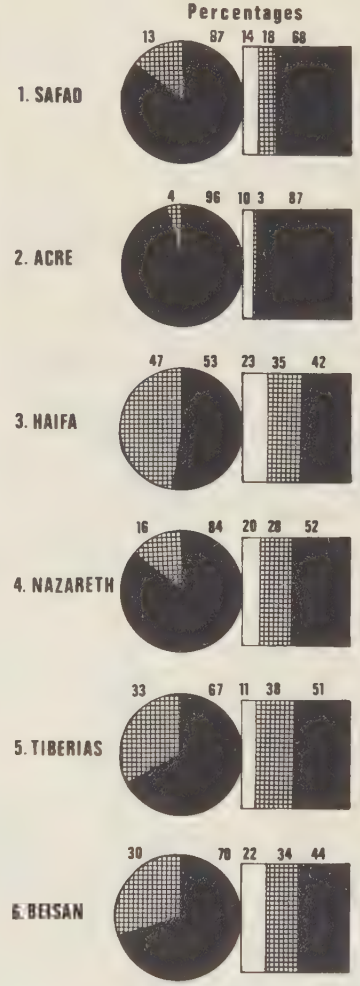
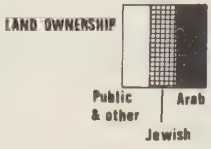
[18] "The Land without People: The People without Land." Phrase by Max Nordau.

does not permit them to return, thereby turning the Zionist myth of a land without people into reality. And the Palestinians who fled their homes? They live to return.

Population & Land Ownership in Galilee (by sub-district)





Population (Estimated, 1946), based on Map No. 93(b) United Nations, August 1950. UN Presentation 573(b).

Land Ownership (1945), based on Map No. 94(b) United Nations, August 1950. UN Presentation 574(b).

Israeli Military Operations in Galilee, 1948

This map is based on IPS archival data and Netanel Lorch's *Israel's War of Independence* (Connecticut: Hartmore House, 1968), p. XXVI, Map VI, Operation Hiram.

Appendix III

QUESTIONNAIRE

A. The War of 1948

1. How did you used to get news in the village?
2. What did you hear about the war?
3. What was your response?
4. Did you expect the war to come to your village?
5. What happened in your village during the war? Was it disrupted, occupied, bombed, strafed? What date, time, and for how long?
6. Do you know of anyone killed or wounded in your village during the war? Were they relatives?
7. Did you see the Zionists (soldiers or civilians) in your village? If not, what did you hear about them and from whom? If yes, where did you see them?
8. How many were they? How did they come to your village? Which direction and what means of transportation? Were you surprised? Why?
9. What did they do in your village?
10. What preparations did your village make for the war? (Arms, supplies, food.)
11. Did you have any arms or military training? Where did you obtain them?
12. Do you know of anyone in your village who had arms or military training? Where did they get them?
13. Who was responsible for your protection? Were they members of the Arab Liberation Army? Where were they stationed? How many were they? What arms did they have?

14. Did anyone give you instructions about what to do if attacked?
15. Did you hear of any instructions?

B. The Exodus

16. When did you leave? What date and what time?
17. Was this the first time you had left your home?
18. Did you leave alone? Who left with you?
19. Did you leave any of your relatives behind?
20. Did any of your relatives leave before you? Why?
21. Did others leave a member of their family behind?
22. Did anyone in the village leave before you? Why?
23. Do you know of anyone who left the village after you did?
24. Do you know of anyone who remained in the village permanently?
25. Why did you leave?
26. What did you take with you when you left? Why?
27. What did others take? Why?
28. Where did you go? Why did you choose that place?
29. How far was it? How long did it take you to get there?
30. Where and how long did you stay? Why?
31. What did you do there?
32. Did you go back to your village? How long did you stay there? What did you do there?
33. Why didn't you stay in the village?
34. What did you do next?

Appendix IV

VILLAGES AND SETTLEMENTS

VILLAGES IN GALILEE

A. Acre

Abu Sinan; Acre; ʿAmqa; ʿArab el ʿAramisha and ʿArab el Quleitat; ʿArab es Samniya; ʿArraba; Beit Jann and ʿEin el Asad; Deir el Asad; Deir Hanna; Ed Damun; El Bassa and Maʿsub; El Biʿna; El Birwa; El Buqeiʿa; El Ghabisiya and Sheikh Dawud; El Makr; El Mazraʿa, Shavei Zion, ʿEin Sara, and Gaʿaton; En Nahr; Er Rama; Er Ruweis; Es Sumeiriya; Ez Zib; Fassuta, Deir el Qasi and El Mansura; Hanita; Iqrit; Jatt; Judeida; Julis; Kabul; Kafr Iʿnan; Kafr Sumeiʿ; Kafr Yasif; Khirbat Jiddin; Khirbat Samah (Eilon); Kisra; Kuweikat; Majd el Kurum; Manshiya; Miʿar; Miʿilya; Nahariya; Nahf; Sajur; Sakhnin; Shaʿb, Suhmata; Tamra; Tarbikha, Tarshiha and Kabri; Umm el Faraj; Yanuh; Yirka.

B. Beisan

Avuqa; Beisan, Sede Nahum, and Messilot; Beit Alfa; Beit hash Shitta (Shatta); Danna; ʿEin Harod; El ʿArida and Sede Eliyahu; El Ashrafiya; El Bashatiwa; El Bawati (Hakimiya); El Birwa; El Fatur; El Ghazawiya, Maoz Haiyim and Neve Eitan; El Hamidiya and Hermonim; El Hamra; El Khuneizir (Ikhneizir); El Murassas; Es Safa; Es Sakhina and Nir David (Tel ʿAmal); Es Samiriya; Et Taiyiba and Benei Berit; Et Tira and Irgun Borokhov; Farwana; Gesher; Gevaʿ; Heftsi Bah; Jabbul and Beit Yosef; Jisr el Majamiʿ; Kafr Misr; Kafra; Kaukab el Hawa; Kefar Yehezqel; Masil el Jizl and Kefar Ruppin (Massada); Qumiya; Sirin; Tel Yosef; Tell esh Shauk; Tirat Tsevi (Ez Zarraʿa); Umm ʿAjra; Wadi el Bira; Yubla; Zabʿa.

C. Nazareth

ʿAfula; ʿArab es Subeih; Balfourya; Buʿeina; Dabburiya; Ed Dahi; ʿEin Mahil; El Mujeidil; Er Reina; Gevat; Ginneigar; Iksal; ʿIlut; Indur; Kafr Kanna; Kafr Manda; Kaukab; Kefar Barukh; Kefar Gidʿon; Kefar ha Horesh; Kefar Tavor (Mas-ha); Kefar Yeladim; Mahane Yisrael; Maʿlul; Mash-had; Merhavya Group; Merhavya Settlement; Mizraʿ, Mt. Tabor; Nahalal and Shimron; Naʿura; Nazareth; Nein; Ramat David, Hash Sharon and ʿAyanot; Rummana; Saffuriya; Sarid; Sulam; Tamra; Tel ʿAdashim; Turʿan; Umm Qubei; ʿUzeir; Yafa.

D. Safad

Abil el Qamh; Aiyelet hash Shahar and Yarda; ʿAkbara; ʿAlma; ʿAmmuqa; ʿArab esh Shamalina (Khirbat Abu Zeina); Beisamun; Biriya; Dafna; Dallata; Dan; Dawwara, ʿAmir and Kefar Nehemya; Deishum; Dhahiriya el Fauqa; Dhahiriya et Tahta; Ed Darbashiya; ʿEin ez Zeitun; ʿEin Zeitim; El ʿAbisiya and Kefar Szold; El Buweiziya; El Khalisa; El Malikiya; El Manara; El Mansura; El Muftakhira; El Qudeiriya; El ʿUlmaniya; En Nabi Yushaʿ; En Naʿima; Er Ras el Ahmar; Es Salihiya; Es Sammuʿi; Es Sanbariya; Esh Shuna; Ez Zawiya; Ez Zuq el Fauqani; Ez Zuq et Tahtani; Fara; Farradiya; Firʿim; Ghabbatiya; Ghuraba; Harrawi; Hatsor; Hula Concession Area; Hunin; Hurfeish; Jahula; Jaʿuna; Jish; Jubb Yusef; Kafr Birʿim; Kefar Gilʿadi; Khisas; Khiyam el Walid; Khirbat El Hiqab; Kirad el Baqqara; Kirad el Ghannama; Lazzaza and Beit Hillel; Mahanayim; Mallaha and ʿArab Zubeid; Mansurat el Kheit; Marus; Mazariʿ ed Daraja and Dardara; Meirun; Metulla; Mishmar hay Yarden; Mughr el Kheit; Qabbaʿa and Jazayir el Hindaj; Qadas; Qaddita; Qeitiya; Rihaniya; Rosh Pinna; Sabalan; Safad; Safsaf; Saliha; Saʿsaʿ; Shauqa et Tahta; She-ar Yashuv; Teitaba; Tuba (ʿArab el Heib); Tuleil and El Huseiniya; Weiziya; Yesud ham Maʿala; Zanghariya (Zuhluq).

E. Tiberias

Afiqim; Ashdot Yaʿaqov; Beit Gan; Beit Zeraʿ (Kefar Gun); Bitanya; Dalhamiya; Deganiya A; Deganiya B; ʿEilabun; ʿEin Gev (Nuqeib); El Hamma; El Manara and Nasr ed Din; El ʿUbeidiya; Es

Samakiya; Es Samra; Esh Shajara; Et Tabigha; Ghuweir Abu Shusha and Genossar; Hadatha, Hittin; Kafr Kama; Kafr Sabt; Kefar Hittim; Khirbat el Waᶜra es Sauda (El Mawasi and El Wuheib); Kinneret; Kinneret Group; Lubiya; Maᶜdhar; Maghar and El Mansura; Majdal; Menahamiya; Migdal; Mitspa; Nimrin; Poriya; Samakh, Massada and Shaᶜar hag Golan; Sejera (Ilanya); Shaᶜara and ᶜOmar; Sharona; Shorashim; Tiberias and Haz Zorᶜim; ᶜUlam; Yaquq; Yavneel and Mishmar hash Shelosha.

Jewish Settlements in Galilee

A. Acre

Eilon, ᶜEvron, Hanita, Matzuva, Nahariya, Regba, Shavei Zion, Yehiam.

B. Beisan

Avuqa, Beit Alfa, Beit hash Shitta, Beit Yosef, Benei Berit, ᶜEin Hanatziv, ᶜEin Harod, Et Tira (Irgun Borokhov), Gesher, Gevaᶜ, Heftsi Bah, Hermonim, Kefar Ruppin, Kefar Yehezqel, Maᶜoz Haiyim, Messilot, Neve Eitan, Nir David, Sede Eliyahu, Sede Nahum, Tel Yosef, Tirat Tsevi.

C. Nazareth

ᶜAfula (Ir Yizreel), ᶜAyanot (Ramat David), Balfourya, Beit Keshet, Davrat, Gevat, Ginneigar, Hash Sharon (Ramat David), Kefar Barukh, Kefar Gidᶜon, Kefar ha Horesh, Kefar Kish, Kefar Tavor, Kefar Yeladim,* Mahane Yisrael,* Merhavya Group, Merhavya Settlement, Mizraᶜ, Nahalal, Sarid, Tamra (Irgun ha Galil), Tel ᶜAdashim.

D. Safad

ᶜAmiᶜad (Ha Hoshlim), Aᶜmir, Aiyelet hash Shahar, Beit Hillel, Biriya, Dafna, Dan, ᶜEin Zeitim, El Manara (Ramim), Hatsor,*

* Not listed by either the Jewish National Fund or the Jewish Agency for Palestine. Listed in "Palestine: Index to Villages and Settlements, 1: 150,000."

Hulata, Kefar Blum, Kefar Gilʿadi (Tel Hai), Kefar Nehemya (Sede Nehemya), Kefar Szold, Maʿale ha-Bashan, Mahanayim, Metulla, Misgav ʿAm, Mishmar hay Yarden, Nehalim, Neot Mordechai, Ramot Naftali, Rosh Pinna, Shamir, She-ar Yashuv, Shefer, Yesud ham Maʿala.

E. Tiberias

Afiqim, Ashdot Yaʿaqov, Beit Gan, Beit Zera (Kefar Gun, Kefar Nathan Laski), Bitanya (Poriya), Deganiya A, Deganiya B, ʿEin Gev, Genossar, Haz Zorʿim (Serguniya), Hukok, Kefar Hittim, Kinneret, Kinneret Group, Massada, Menahamiya, Migdal, Mishmar hash Shelosha, Mitspa, Sejera (Ilanya), Shaʿar hag Golan, Shadmot Devora, Sharona, Yavneel.

Appendix V

ARAB POPULATION IN GALILEE BY RELIGION*

Approximately 81 per cent of the Arab population in Galilee was Muslim, 14 per cent Christian and 5 per cent other religious groups, primarily Druze, distributed as follows:

Sub-district	Muslims (%)	Christians (%)	Others (%)
Acre	30	42	77
Beisan	10	2	0
Nazareth	18	41	0
Safad	28	6	9
Tiberias	14	9	14
Total	169,200	28,350	9,940

* Based on Palestine's Department of Statistics' 1946 estimates for the settled Arab population as found in *General Monthly Bulletin of Current Statistics* (May, 1947), p. 240.

Appendix VI

LAND SALE BY NON-PALESTINIAN ARABS*

Location	Area in Dunums	Family Names of Sellers	Nationality
Acre Sub-District:			
Nahariya	2,500	Oweini	Lebanese
Nazareth Sub-district:			
Marj Ibn ʿAmer** (Plain of Esdraelon)	240,000	Sursock	Lebanese
Safad Sub-district:			
Dafna	3,000	Francis	Lebanese
Ed Dawwara	1,600	Debki and Shams	Lebanese
El Barjiyat	1,200	Fadl	Syrian
El Khalisa	1,100	Emir Chehab	Lebanese
El Malikiya	3,500	Bazza	Lebanese
El Manara and Udeisa	2,000	Ahmad el Asʿad	Lebanese
En Naʿima	1,300	Chehab	Lebanese
Es Salhiya	800	Emirs Faʿour and Shaman	Syrian
Ez Zawiya	1,400	Farha	Lebanese
Ez Zuq et Tahtani	4,000	Ghulmia and Jbara	Lebanese
Hawwara	1,100	Deishum villagers	Lebanese
Hula Concession Area	41,500	ʿAli Salam	Lebanese
Khan el Dweir (Dan)	1,500	Shabʿa villagers	Lebanese
Kh. es Summan (Kefar Szold)	1,500	Zaal Salloum	Syrian
Khiyam el Walid	4,000	Bozo	Syrian
Kirad el Ghannama, Kirad el Kheit, and Kirad el Baqqara	3,000	Heirs of Emir Jazairi	Syrian

* Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945*, pp. 27-28.

** This sale displaced 1,746 Arab farming families comprising 8,730 persons (see the *Shaw Commission Report, 1930* [Cmd. 3530], p. 118).

Location	Area in Dunums	Family Names of Sellers	Nationality
Qadas	9,000	Farhat and Bazza and Mardinis (of Syria)	Lebanese
Qaddita	900	Father Shukrallah	Lebanese
Yarda	700	Father Shukrallah	Lebanese
Tiberias Sub-district:			
Hittin	3,000	Heirs of Salim Ramadan	Lebanese
Nimrin	2,500	Heirs of Jamal and Milki	Lebanese
Samakh	8,000	Comte de Shedid	Egyptian
Samakh	4,500	Quteit villagers	Lebanese
Kafar Sabt and Shaᶜara	34,000	Heirs of Emir Jazairi	Syrian
Nuqeib (Ulᶜubeidiya)	8,000	Bahai Persians	Iranian

Appendix VII *

LAND OWNERSHIP IN GALILEE

Sub-district	Arabs	Jews	Public	Total
Acre	697,751	24,997	76,915	799,663
Beisan	164,948	124,755	77,384	367,087
Nazareth	263,088	137,382	97,063	497,533
Safad	490,863	121,488	83,780	696,131
Tiberias	231,761	167,406	41,802	440,969

* Palestine, *Village Statistics, 1945,* pp. 41, 44, 63, 71 and 73.

Appendix VIII

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

In my projection of the Arab population of the Galilee District from the last official estimate of 31 December 1946 to 31 December 1949, I assumed that the population would increase from 1946 to 1949 at at least as high a rate as it had increased from 1944 to 1946 (see Table 17). The assumption of a geometrical increase in population can be successfully applied only over a short period of time. In *A Survey of Palestine,* III, sec. 1, future fertility among Muslims and Christians was expected to remain constant or decline and among Druze to remain high, while mortality among all three groups was expected to decrease, but at a slower rate than before. Therefore, one might expect the growth rate to remain as high or higher from 1946 to 1949 as from 1944 to 1946.

In order to determine the average annual growth rate between 1944 and 1946, I multiplied the 1944 population by the growth rate to produce the increment which added to the 1944 population resulted in the estimated 1945 population. This procedure performed on the 1945 estimated population should produce the official estimate for the 1946 population if the growth rate was correctly determined.

The initial estimate for the growth rate must be modified until it produces the official estimate for the 1946 population when applied to the 1944 population. With the correct growth rate established, this same procedure was used to determine the 1947, 1948, and 1949 population projections. I used the official estimates of the 1946 population as my base and multiplied them by the growth rate as determined above. I added these increments to the 1946 population to produce the following estimates of the 1947, 1948, and 1949 population, excluding migration, displacement, and nomadic peoples.

TABLE 17

1944-1946 Average Arab Growth Rate (per 1,000 Settled Inhabitants), by Religion and Sub-District

Sub-district	Total	Muslims	Christians	Others
Acre				
Urban	47.6	51.3	33.8	0.0
Rural	36.9	36.8	27.4	49.9
Total	38.9	39.8	28.7	49.2
Beisan				
Urban	34.2	36.3	11.6	0.0
Rural	17.8	17.3	44.5	—
Total	22.9	23.0	22.8	0.0
Nazareth				
Urban	46.1	59.7	37.1	—
Rural	42.1	45.0	16.3	—
Total	43.6	48.0	32.5	—
Safad				
Urban	35.1	36.7	0.0	—
Rural	29.0	29.5	0.0	50.0
Total	30.2	31.0	0.0	50.0
Tiberias				
Urban	43.3	48.4	13.1	0.0
Rural	29.9	28.6	27.7	49.6
Total	32.6	32.6	23.0	49.2

The growth rate was tabulated by the author from the population estimates of 1944 and 1946.

Projected Arab Settled Population

Sub-district	Urban	Rural	Total
	31 December 1947		
Acre			
Muslims	11,491	41,679	53,170
Christians	2,574	9,565	12,139
Others	90	7,929	8,017
Total	14,155	59,171	73,326
Beisan			
Muslims	5,264	11,780	17,044
Christians	445	250	695
Others	20	—	20
Total	5,729	12,030	17,759
Nazareth			
Muslims	6,676	24,934	31,610
Christians	9,593	2,561	12,154
Others	—	—	0
Total	16,269	27,495	43,764
Safad			
Muslims	10,139	38,637	48,776
Christians	430	1,200	1,630
Others	—	903	903
Total	10,569	40,740	51,309
Tiberias			
Muslims	5,232	19,492	24,724
Christians	790	1,737	2,527
Others	10	1,480	1,490
Total	6,032	22,709	28,741

PROJECTED ARAB SETTLED POPULATION — *Continued*

Sub-district	Urban	Rural	Total
	31 December 1948		
Acre			
Muslims	12,080	43,213	55,293
Christians	2,661	9,827	12,488
Others	90	8,322	8,412
Total	14,831	61,362	76,193
Beisan			
Muslims	5,456	11,984	17,440
Christians	450	262	712
Others	20	—	20
Total	5,926	12,246	18,172
Nazareth			
Muslims	7,075	26,056	33,131
Christians	9,949	2,603	12,547
Others	—	—	0
Total	17,024	28,659	45,683
Safad			
Muslims	10,511	39,777	50,288
Christians	430	1,200	1,630
Others	—	948	948
Total	10,941	41,925	52,866
Tiberias			
Muslims	5,485	20,049	25,534
Christians	801	1,785	2,586
Others	10	1,553	1,563
Total	6,296	23,387	29,683

PROJECTED ARAB SETTLED POPULATION — *Continued*

Sub-district	Urban	Rural	Total
	31 December 1949		
Acre			
Muslims	12,700	44,803	57,503
Christians	2,751	10,096	12,847
Others	90	8,738	8,828
Total	15,541	63,637	79,178
Beisan			
Muslims	5,654	12,191	17,845
Christians	455	273	728
Others	20	—	20
Total	6,129	12,464	18,593
Nazareth			
Muslims	7,497	27,228	34,725
Christians	10,318	2,645	12,963
Others	—	—	0
Total	17,815	29,873	47,688
Safad			
Muslims	10,897	40,950	51,847
Christians	430	1,200	1,630
Others	—	996	996
Total	11,327	43,146	54,473
Tiberias			
Muslims	5,750	20,623	26,373
Christians	811	1,834	2,645
Others	10	1,630	1,640
Total	6,571	24,087	30,658

In these projections, the increment of growth was determined in each separate category, i.e., urban Muslims in Acre, etc. In the following projections, the growth rate is multiplied with larger categories, the religious groups or the urban/rural opposition in the sub-districts or the population of each sub-district. The resulting projections are very close to those above.

PROJECTED ARAB SETTLED POPULATION

Sub-District	Religious groups		Urban/Rural		Sub-District Total
		31 December 1947			
Acre	Muslims	53,165			
	Christians	12,139	Urban	14,153	
	Others	8,016	Rural	59,166	
	Total	73,320	Total	73,319	73,315
Beisan	Muslims	17,043			
	Christians	696	Urban	5,729	
	Others	20	Rural	12,030	
	Total	17,759	Total	17,759	17,758
Nazareth	Muslims	31,608			
	Christians	12,153	Urban	16,267	
	Others	0	Rural	27,491	
	Total	43,761	Total	43,758	43,758
Safad	Muslims	48,777			
	Christians	1,630	Urban	10,568	
	Others	903	Rural	40,738	
	Total	51,310	Total	51,306	51,304
Tiberias	Muslims	24,720			
	Christians	2,527	Urban	6,030	
	Others	1,490	Rural	22,709	
	Total	28,737	Total	28,739	28,737

		31 December 1948			
Acre	Muslims	55,281			
	Christians	12,487	Urban	14,827	
	Others	8,410	Rural	61,349	
	Total	76,178	Total	76,176	76,167
Beisan	Muslims	17,435			
	Christians	711	Urban	5,925	
	Others	20	Rural	12,245	
	Total	18,166	Total	18,170	18,164
Nazareth	Muslims	33,125			
	Christians	12,547	Urban	17,017	
	Others	0	Rural	28,648	
	Total	45,672	Total	45,665	45,666
Safad	Muslims	50,289			
	Christians	1,630	Urban	10,939	
	Others	948	Rural	41,920	
	Total	52,867	Total	52,859	52,853
Tiberias	Muslims	25,526			
	Christians	2,585	Urban	6,291	
	Others	1,563	Rural	23,388	
	Total	29,674	Total	29,679	29,674

		31 December 1949			
Acre	Muslims	57,481			
	Christians	12,845	Urban	15,533	
	Others	8,824	Rural	63,612	
	Total	79,150	Total	79,145	79,130
Beisan	Muslims	17,836			
	Christians	728	Urban	6,128	
	Others	20	Rural	12,462	
	Total	18,584	Total	18,590	18,580
Nazareth	Muslims	34,715			
	Christians	12,955	Urban	17,801	
	Others	0	Rural	29,854	
	Total	47,670	Total	47,655	47,657
Safad	Muslims	51,848			
	Christians	1,630	Urban	11,323	
	Others	996	Rural	43,135	
	Total	54,474	Total	54,458	54,450
Tiberias	Muslims	26,358			
	Christians	2,644	Urban	6,564	
	Others	1,640	Rural	24,088	
	Total	30,642	Total	30,652	30,641

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